HOOP DREAMS

NELLY FURTADO AIMED FOR A 'SONICALLY CREATIVE' ALBUM PAGE 12

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Doug Ford asked his brother Rob Ford to stop his car so the councillor could retrieve a BlackBerry dropped by a member of the media while chasing the mayor on Monday. At left, Mayor Ford arrives to the Osgoode Hall courthouse, where he appealed a November ruling that would strip him of his mayoralty due to a conflict-of-interest breach. At right, Ford is seen leaving the courthouse. RICHARD LAUTENS/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Who is the real Ford?

Court hears mayor's appeal. One argument portrays Ford as 'honest,' another as deceitful

Three appellate judges in Rob Ford's conflict-of-interest trial heard lawyers give two vastly different descriptions of the mayor on Monday. One of a Ford who is "honest and frank," the other of a mayor who is wilfully blind to the law and "playing" the judges.

"He's just playing with you," said lawyer Clayton Ruby, representing Paul Magder, the citizen who launched the legal challenge against Ford.

The remark came after Ruby read sections of the mayor's testimony in the initial trial in which he pledged to abide by the conflict-of-interest law despite never having read it. Ford had also said he believed he understood it because his father was an MPP.

Ford would be able to keep his seat despite having been found guilty of violating the Municipal Conflict of Interest Act had the violation been the result of an error in judgment. But Justice Charles Hackland said that was not the case, finding that Ford was "wilfully blind" to the law.

The conflict at issue arose when Ford voted to overturn a motion that ordered him to repay money donated to his football foundation last year.

Ford's lawyer, Alan Lenczner, described a simple man who, in his desire to help kids play football, misunderstood the conflict-of-interest law and whose actions may not even have been improper.

"His conduct was honest and frank," said Lenczner. "There was no misinformation, there was no hiding."

Lenczner also said the mayor could not have been expected to understand the legal intricacies at play. "Mr. Ford is a high school graduate," he said.

On the other hand, Ruby said Ford's conduct was designed to maintain deniability of his disregard for the law.

The judges have promised to reach a verdict promptly and release it online at Canlii.org, a free Canadian legal database.

JESSICA SMITH/METRO

In his defence

- Lawyer Alan Lenczner is also arguing that the motion that gave rise to Ford's contentious vote was itself illegal.

Journalists not allowed at trial

Proceedings in India's gang-rape case will be closed to the media, a magistrate has ruled PAGE 8

Self-hypnosis a birth trend

Baby, baby, baby, can't you see, sometimes your birth just hypnotizes me? PAGE 16

Back when we had Stanley

Leafs look back on franchise's glory days and feel optimistic as new season dawns PAGE 28

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Infrastructure

Cyclists eagerly await east-west route downtown

After more than a decade of spinning their wheels, Toronto cycling advocates say they're excited because a protected, east-west cycling route through the busiest part of downtown is finally poised to take off this year.

An environmental study of a Richmond-Adelaide bike corridor should finally be completed by the end of 2013, making a construction start next year a real possibility, says the chair of the city's public works committee.

The bike lanes would connect Sherbourne Street in the east to Bathurst in the west. The study will determine the best configuration and route, says Toronto's cycling infrastructure manager Daniel Egan. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Crime

Suspect nabbed in old sex assaults

Toronto police said Monday a tip helped them make an arrest in connection with two sexual assaults dating back two decades.

Police said evidence has linked the suspect to the alleged crimes that took place eight months apart, one in 1993 involving a 19-year-old woman and the other in 1994 involving a 46-year-old woman.

Steven John McGuire
POLICE HANDOUT

Steven John McGuire, 43, is charged with sexual assault with a weapon and robbery in the '93 incident, and breaking-and-entering, sexual assault with a weapon, robbery and threatening death in the '94 incident. **THE CANADIAN PRESS**

All aboard: Basement gets the Via treatment

Jason Shron built a section of a Via coach in his Thornhill basement. It's the culmination of a lifelong obsession with trains, and a four-and-a-half-year construction project. Shron's first memory is being lost, at two years of age, crying on a Toronto-to-Montreal Via Rail passenger train. That's when the obsession began. "For me, being on the train is ... this wonderful cosy comfy space, especially when the weather is terrible outside. It's sort of this microcosm of comfort," he says. VINCE TALOTTA/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Deputy mayor prepared to step up

City hall. With Ford's future uncertain, Holyday is willing to assume the mayoralty with an eye towards the 2014 election

If Mayor Rob Ford loses his conflict-ruling appeal and city council won't appoint him back into the job, Deputy Mayor Doug Holyday is ready to seek the mayoral appointment.

Holyday, a 71-year-old veteran councillor and former Etobicoke mayor, would enjoy significant support across council's political lines but for one thing — he refuses to rule out using a council appointment as a springboard to run for mayor in the 2014 general election.

"Whoever has the (appointed mayor's) job would be a lame duck coming out if they were just going to do this as a caretaker and they weren't going to run in 2014," Holyday said Monday.

"Both (city) staff and councillors and everybody else would know that they don't have to deal with this person in a year. I'd want to be in the position to make my own mind up in two years."

If the Divisional Court panel upholds a lower-court ruling, the mayor's office will be declared vacant and council must decide whether to appoint a caretaker mayor to finish Ford's term or order a mayoral byelection.

Many councillors, including right-leaning centrist Gloria Lindsay Luby, say any appointee mayor would have an unfair advantage going into the 2014 mayoral race.

After Ford's tenure, "Toronto needs a really fresh start," said Luby, a political veteran who is putting herself up as a candidate for mayoral appointment while promising to sit out the mayor's race in 2014.

Holyday emphasized that he hopes Ford wins his appeal and is not forced from office. If Ford loses, Holyday said, he will try to rally colleagues to appoint him back into the mayor's chair. **TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE**

Quoted

"I'm not saying there wouldn't be some penalty attached — maybe (Mayor Rob Ford) has to apologize to council for using his letterhead (to solicit donations from lobbyists) and maybe say he won't use it again."

Deputy Mayor Doug Holyday, who stressed that he will drum up support among council colleagues to return Ford to office, if need be.

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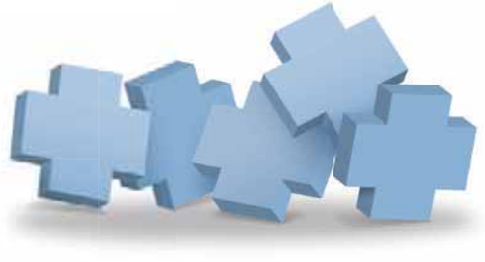

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Plus more.

Like Pinterest, but you can actually buy stuff

Biz. T.O. models launch e-commerce hybrid

PHOEBE HO
toronto@metronews.ca

A pair of Toronto models are hoping to bring a new online shopping experience to Canadians.

"It's kind of like a Pinterest where everyone goes on and shares images, but on Pinterest, you can't buy anything," said Coatsworths.com co-founder Matthew Coatsworth. "I talked to a lot of people and they're pretty frustrated about that, they'll spend hours and hours trying to find all the cool images they see."

Coatsworth, 27, and his brother Andrew, 31, put their modelling careers on the back burner to work on an idea they believe will fill the gap for many Canadian consumers. Their new website, set for its preliminary launch on Tuesday, will be a social media and e-commerce hybrid.

"Canadians are actually one of the most socially engaged countries in the entire world, so we figured, why not create a platform where people can buy and be socially engaged as well?" says Andrew.

While he's travelled over the world modelling the last few years, Coatsworth says he's kept his eyes open for a business model that would work in Canada.

Matthew and Andrew Coatsworth are putting their modelling careers on hold to launch their new business, Coatsworths.com. SUBMITTED

Meet the entrepreneurs:

Matthew and Andrew Coatsworth have been modelling around the world for designers like Louis Vuitton, Armani, Dolce & Gabbana, Ralph Lauren and Roberto Cavalli since 2008.

- Both worked at an oil rig in Western Canada before modelling.
- Matthew moved back to Toronto last year from London, England. Andrew moved back around the same time from Milan, Italy.

"I wanted to try and find something that was very lucrative in different countries or different cities that wasn't happening back in Canada so that I could eventually move back and take full advantage of that opportunity," he says.

The idea is to have members dictate what products they'll be selling on their site.

Members can post photos of clothing, home decor or anything that tickles their fancy, and the brothers will either stock those items or provide links to where it could be purchased.

Members will also have the ability to "love" or "coat" a photo and become trendsetters by racking up points.

"They get points off of it and we keep track so they can get more exposure and create a following, so now they're also influencing trends and not just buying," says Coatsworth.

For now though, members will only be able to post photos so that they can first test the waters and get an idea of some hot items people are looking for. Coatsworth says the full site will be available this year around April.

Aid to Haiti 'nuts?': Cherry

Don Cherry took to Twitter on Monday to air his objections over the millions in aid money that Canada sends to Haiti.

A series of tweets posted on the outspoken hockey commentator's Twitter feed questioned why Ottawa has sent tens of millions of dollars in aid to the earthquake-battered Caribbean nation.

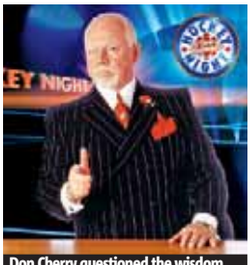
"You know, I am one of those guys, like most people in Canada, we like to help the countries all over the world. But sometimes it makes you wonder," read a couple of the tweets.

"Maybe it's just me. But Canada gave Haiti 49.5 million dollars last year. Are we nuts?"

A report on the website for the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) says Canada sent nearly $49.5 million to Haiti in 2010-2011.

Cherry asked why Ottawa would send so much cash to Haiti when the health-care system in Canada is stretched to its limits.

"We've got a guy dying in Toronto waiting 3 hours for an ambulance," the controversial star of Hockey Night in Canada tweeted to his nearly 118,000 followers. "We got people waiting 7, 8, 10 hours, if they're lucky, in a waiting room with one doctor for a zillion people."



Don Cherry questioned the wisdom of Canada sending nearly $50 million to Haiti. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Nickels, dimes and millions:

"We nickel and dime our doctors, nurses and veterans plus a million other services. Yet we can send almost 50 million to Haiti."

Don Cherry, via Twitter

The broadcaster's tweets came five days before the third anniversary of a massive quake in Haiti that killed an estimated 300,000 people and left more than 1.5 million homeless.

The messages follow recent remarks made by Canada's international co-operation minister that sparked controversy in Haiti.

Julian Fantino told a newspaper last week that CIDA will stop funding new aid projects in Haiti until it finds a more effective approach to help the country.

The former head of the Ontario Provincial Police indicated that Canada has sent $1 billion in development assistance to Haiti since 2006.

"I'll tell ya something," Cherry wrote. "The working guy is getting kind of sick of people spending money like that ... Lets (sic) smarten up. As the old saying goes, charity begins at home. Am I right or is it just me?" THE CANADIAN PRESS

Using alias?

Acclaimed chef reported missing

Jonathan Gushue
TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The executive chef at one of Ontario's finest restaurants has been missing for more than a week after a pre-New Year's Eve dinner in downtown Toronto.

No one has heard from Jonathan Gushue, the award-winning chef at Langdon Hall in Cambridge, since Dec. 29, after he and a dinner companion parted ways.

Gushue's wife Karen Collingwood, 41, is trying to keep herself and the couple's three children composed.

The chef may reportedly be going under the name Jonathan Herder.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

EPA head quit over pipeline plan: Report

According to a New York Post report, Lisa Jackson, the former head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, resigned because of the proposed Keystone XL pipeline. KEVIN WOLF/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS FILE

Rumour has it. Jackson has voiced concerns over Keystone XL, which President Obama appears set to approve

The head of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency resigned abruptly last week, reportedly to protest the Obama administration's apparent plans to approve TransCanada's Keystone XL pipeline in the coming months.

The New York Post reported that Lisa Jackson suddenly quit her post because she doesn't want to be at the helm of the agency when the White House rubber-stamps the project.

"She was going to stay on until November or December," a source close to Jackson told the Post. "But this changed it. She will not be the EPA head when Obama supports (Keystone XL) getting built."

The EPA is one of several federal agencies that's been advising the Obama administration on the $7-billion pipeline, a project that would carry millions of barrels of crude a week from Alberta's carbon-intensive oilsands to the U.S. Gulf Coast.

The ultimate decision on Keystone XL's fate rests with the State Department.

Jackson was appointed soon after Obama was elected. Over the past four years, she's pushed through the toughest new air- and water-pollution rules in more than 20 years and has frequently spoken out on climate change.

In July 2010, as TransCanada awaited a decision from the White House on the pipeline, the EPA sent a letter to the State Department calling its draft environmental assessment "inadequate." It chastised analysts for failing to address the greenhouse-gas emissions associated with the project, and urged the State Department to further examine safety and spill-response planning, as well as the impact on Canadian native communities.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Aurora. Police testify in hearing of suspected movie-theatre gunman

The families of victims of last year's mass shooting at a Colorado theatre sat through emotional testimony Monday from police officers who tried to save the lives of the wounded.

One sergeant recalled during the hearing for suspected gunman James Holmes that he did not find a pulse for the youngest victim, six-year-old Veronica Moser-Sullivan.

Another said he had to stop one man worried about his young daughter from jumping out of the moving patrol car.

A bearded Holmes didn't appear to show any emotion.

The first extensive details were emerging about the young man suspected of killing 12 people and wounding at least 58 in one of the worst mass shootings in the U.S. last year. The hearing will determine whether the case will go to trial.

Police officers who arrested Holmes described him as unusually relaxed but fidgety at times.

Any new details to emerge this week — including Holmes's mental state — will come amid the discussion over an array of proposals, including tougher gun laws and better psychiatric care. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Family members and victims line up to get into court for a preliminary hearing for Aurora theatre shooting suspect James Holmes at the courthouse in Centennial, Colo., on Monday. ED ANDRIESK/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Media barred from rape-and-murder trial

India. Case expected to be sent to special 'fast-track' court to avoid typical delays

An Indian magistrate ruled Monday that the media will not be allowed to attend pre-trial hearings or the trial of the five men accused of raping and killing a young student in the Indian capital, a police official said.

Magistrate Namrita Aggarwal upheld the prosecutor's request, according to police spokesman Rajan Bhagat. Hundreds of journalists, lawyers and curious onlookers had crowded the courtroom where the five were to appear. Outside, more than a dozen TV trucks jammed the streets, and dozens of reporters from around the world were waiting for news.

The defendants later appeared before the magistrate, who scheduled another pre-trial hearing on Thursday that is expected to result in the case being sent to a "fast-track" court. Since the Dec. 16 attack, New Delhi has set up five such courts to handle sexual-assault cases, which often get bogged down for years. Indian courts are notorious for delays, with millions of cases pending.

The trial is expected to begin in the coming days. Indian rape trials are normally closed to the media.

Authorities have charged the men with murder, rape and other crimes that could bring them the death penalty. A sixth suspect, who is 17 years old, is expected to be tried in a juvenile court.

Prosecutor Rajiv Mohan said last week that a DNA test confirmed that the blood of the victim matched stains found on the clothes of all the accused.

On Sunday, two of the defendants offered to become informants against the others, according to reporters present at the hearing. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

People protest in New Delhi on Monday over the recent gang rape of a young woman on a bus. A magistrate has ruled that media will be barred from pre-trial hearings and the trial of the five men accused in the case. TSERING TOPGYAL/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Indonesia. Women face ban on bike straddling

Authorities in Indonesia's Aceh province are pressing ahead with a proposed Islamic law that would ban female passengers from straddling motorbikes despite reported opposition from the central government.

Aceh introduced a version of Shariah law in 2009 after it gained autonomy in a 2005 peace deal to end a long-running separatist war there. The Aceh laws regulate dress and public morality, require shops to close at prayer time and are enforced by a special unit. Punishments can include public caning.

On Monday, authorities distributed a notice stating that women will not be allowed to straddle motorbikes unless it's an "emergency," and will not be allowed to hold onto the driver.

Suaidi Yahya, mayor of the city of Lhokseumawe, said a ban was needed because the "curves of a woman's body" are more visible when straddling a motorbike than when sitting sideways. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Chief makes new demands after scathing report

Hunger strike. Audit criticizing spending at Spence's reserve sparks a bid to rescind part of Tories' latest budget

A woman takes children to school on a four-wheel vehicle following their lunch break in Attawapiskat, Ont., in 2011. An audit of millions of dollars in spending at the troubled reserve in northern Ontario reveals an absence of basic accounting by the band council and ongoing indifference by government departments.
ADRIAN WYLD/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

The battle over the plight of Canada's First Nations escalated Monday amid accusations of a cynical public relations ploy by the Harper government and new demands by a hunger-striking chief.

Chief Theresa Spence, who has been on a liquid diet since Dec. 11, said she now wants elements of the Conservatives' latest omnibus budget bill repealed as soon as MPs return to Ottawa at the end of the month.

Spence had previously been seeking only a meeting between Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the Governor General and First Nations leaders to discuss outstanding treaty matters.

"We are asking that the legislation related to (native) lands encoded in Bill C-45 must be rescinded as soon as Parliament resumes," Spence said in a release.

The new demand came as Ottawa released a scathing audit of tens of millions of dollars in spending on Spence's Attawapiskat reserve, a troubled community on the shores of James Bay in northern Ontario.

The audit details an absence of basic accounting by the band council and ongoing indifference by federal government departments.

Spence's release called the leaked audit "no more than a distraction of the true issue ... to discredit Chief Spence, who is willing to lay down her life for a larger cause."

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Political ploy?

The Deloitte audit — released publicly Monday after being leaked to select media outlets on the weekend — catalogues more than $109 million in spending over almost seven years, much of it poorly documented, undocumented, or questionable.

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40	$13	$11	$18	$13	$24	$19	$41	$29
45	$16	$13	$23	$17	$33	$22	$57	$38
50	$17	$13	$33	$24	$52	$36	$96	$67
55	$26	$16	$53	$37	$86	$66	$168	$123
60	$37	$26	$88	$59	$160	$110	$310	$212
65	$61	$40	$146	$94	$282	$184	$551	$392
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Safety measures

U.S. agency wants electric, hybrid cars to make noise

The U.S. government wants electric and hybrid vehicles to make noise when travelling under 18 miles per hour (about 29 km/h) so pedestrians can hear them coming. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration says the cars don't make enough noise at low speeds to warn walkers, bicyclists and the visually impaired. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

U.S. federal settlement

Banks to pay $8.5B over wrongful foreclosures

U.S. banks have taken another step to clear away the wreckage of the 2008 financial crisis by agreeing to pay $8.5 billion to settle charges that they wrongfully foreclosed on millions of homeowners.

The deal could compensate hundreds of thousands of Americans whose homes were seized because of abuses such as "robo-signing," when banks automatically signed off on foreclosures without properly reviewing documents.

But consumer advocates complained that regulators settled for too low a price. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Dawg Grog

Beer fan makes brew for dogs

An Oregon man who loves beer and loves his dog has concocted some hooch for the pooch. Daniel Keeton calls his canine creation Dawg Grog, though there's no alcohol in the doggie brew. Ingredients include vegetable broth and spent grain. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Wanted: One hotshot new central banker (nerves of steel req'd)

Apply immediately!
If you can shape global economic policy, keep inflation in check and manage the loonie, you too could be the next BoC governor

Psst. Want to be the next governor of the Bank of Canada? An executive search firm has posted an ad for the position on the central bank's website.

The ad doesn't say how much the job pays, but according to the bank's website, the salary for 2012 was between $431,800 to $507,900 plus pension, health and dental benefits.

But the ad does outline an impressive list of criteria.

Market Minute

DOLLAR 101.45¢ (+0.14¢)

TSX 12,499.55 (-41.26)

OIL $93.19 US (+10¢)

GOLD $1,646.30 US (-$2.60)

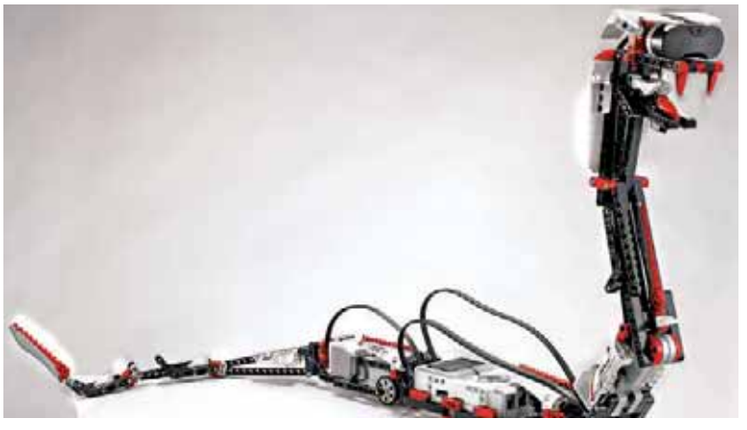
Natural gas: $3.27 US (-2¢)
Dow Jones: 13,384.29 (-50.92)

Quite apart from the daunting task of succeeding the current governor, Mark Carney, who is seen as something of an international financial superstar, the job is not for the faint of heart.

Carney's resume, for example, includes a doctorate in economics from Oxford University, 13 years with Goldman Sachs and a stint as a senior official in the federal finance department.

His successor must be capable of running an institution that helps shape global economic policy, keep Canada's inflation rate in check and maintain integrity in the value of the loonie, says the ad posted by Odgers Berndston.

It also says the candidate must be a Canadian citizen. That appears to rule out an international swap for Carney, who is leaving in June to become governor of the Bank of England. TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE



Ssssweet! This snake can talk to your iPhone

Meet Reptar, a slithering high-tech snake that's one of 17 different robots that can be built with the new Lego Mindstorms EV3 platform, a $350 US kit that was unveiled Monday at the International Consumer Electronics Show in Las Vegas. The robots will have the ability to talk to iPhones, iPads and iPod Touches through Bluetooth wireless connections. LEGO/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Passenger traffic. WestJet, Air Canada post strong 2012

Canada's major airlines enjoyed healthy passenger demand heading into 2013 as they reported record load factors for December, carrying substantially more passengers with modest increases to capacity.

WestJet said its load factor for December hit a record 81.9 per cent while Air Canada hit record load factors for the month and the year.

Montreal-based Air Canada said its load factor rose to 82.1 per cent last month while the full-year number was 82.7 per cent, up 1.1 points in each case.

Get a load of this

- Analysts monitor load factor as a measure of how much total fleet capacity is used by an airline to carry passengers.

Air Canada said it had a 3.2 per cent increase in passenger traffic last month over December 2011, with a 6.6 per cent increase to U.S. destinations and a 5.1 per cent increase on transatlantic routes. THE CANADIAN PRESS

SAY 'I DO' TO THESE UNIQUE WEDDING TRENDS

SHE SAYS...
Jessica Napier
metronews.ca/voices/she-says

The holiday season is over, which means that the wedding planning season has officially begun. With most couples walking down the aisle during the spring and summer months, many are starting to make plans for their upcoming nuptials.

From the cheesy first dance to the bouquet toss, most weddings tend to feel like the same thing over and over again. "No matter how unique a couple wants to be, there are still certain traditions they'll want to honour," says Four Weddings Canada producer Marnie Sugarman. Sugarman has overseen more than 100 weddings while working on the reality show in which brides attend and judge each other's weddings to compete for a dream honeymoon.

So how can couples make their special day stand out among the cookie-cutter ceremonies? Skip the tacky convention centre bridal shows (where bad taste goes to die) and consider these five hot wedding trends for 2013.

Guest ye be judged

Formal "You're Not Invited" announcements are the perfect way to let those pushy friends and relatives know that they didn't make the cut.

Actually getting hitched is only the beginning: Flash mobs, choreographed dances and skits are just some of the creative ways couples are going above and beyond to entertain their wedding guests, says Sugarman. Because nothing says "I'll love you for eternity" like circus animals and a pyrotechnic display.

You are cordially uninvited: Formal "You're Not Invited" announcements are the perfect way to let those pushy friends and relatives know that they didn't make the cut. Yes believe it or not, couples are actually spending hundreds of dollars on stationery and calligraphy fees to reach out to the people they don't like enough to put on the guest list.

Ditch the white dress: Let's face it; most of us aren't fooling anyone in those virginal white dresses anymore. If you're both in your late-20s or older and have been living together for a few years then it's safe to assume that people know you aren't saving it for marriage. So why stick with the oh-so-chaste plain white dress? Opt for an unconventional shade such as soft pink or yellow, which are becoming increasingly popular says Sugarman.

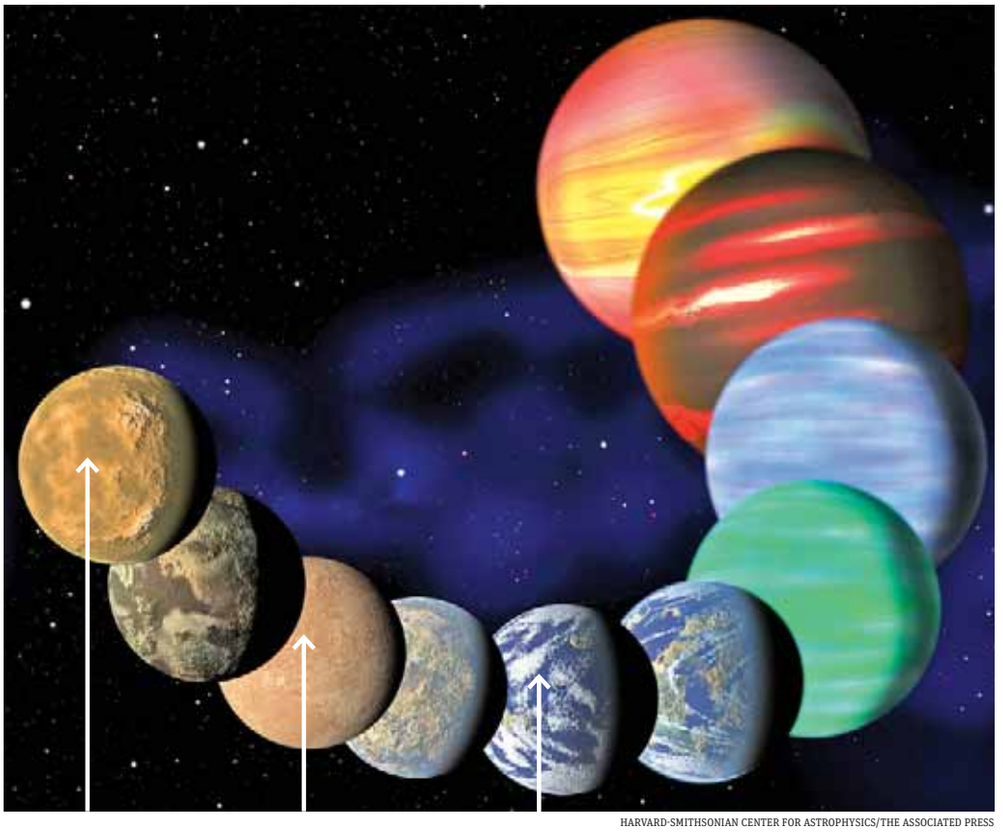
Churches are so over: From art galleries to high-end furniture stores, many couples are seeking out unique venues to exchange their vows. Also, anyone on Pinterest knows that banquet hall receptions are out and adorably twee barnyard hoedowns are in.

Make your Big Day a small affair: The couples on Four Weddings Canada spent an average of $31,625 on their weddings. With that kind of money you could buy a brand new Mini Cooper convertible, finance two years of university education or put a down payment on a house. So instead of donning an haute couture blush-pink gown and dancing down the aisle in an airplane hangar, you could just pop some champagne while signing the papers at city hall and save yourself a whole lot of money.

Wedding bell news: Let your gown do the blushing for you.
PASCAL LE SEGRETAIN/ GETTY IMAGES

Follow Jessica Napier on Twitter @MetroSheSays

So many worlds of possibility



HARVARD-SMITHSONIAN CENTER FOR ASTROPHYSICS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Goldilocks mission

Spacecraft spots billions of Earth-size planets

This artist rendering released Monday by Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics shows the different types of planets in our Milky Way galaxy detected by NASA's Kepler spacecraft.
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Not too hot, not too cold

17B

A new estimate presented at the American Astronomical Society suggests that the Milky Way galaxy is home to at least 17 billion planets similar in size to Earth.

It doesn't mean all are potentially habitable, but the sheer number is a welcome starting point in the search for worlds like our own.

Scientists have yet to find a twin Earth — one that's not only the right size but also located in a zone that's not too hot and not too cold where water might exist in liquid form.

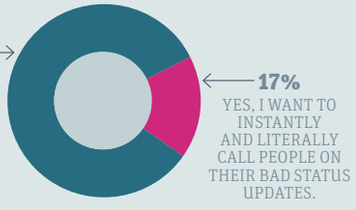
Search for just-right twin

- Two independent groups came up with the new estimate after a fresh analysis of data gathered by NASA's Kepler spacecraft, launched in 2009 to track down other Earths. The craft spots a planet when it passes in front of the planet's star.
- One team, led by Francois Fressin of the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, estimated at least one in six stars has an Earth-size planet orbiting it.
- Using a different method, researchers at the University of California, Berkeley and University of Hawaii determined 17 per cent of stars host planets that are one to two times the diameter of Earth.

Metropolitan Panel

Register at metropolitanpanel.ca and take the quick poll

Canada is the guinea pig for Facebook's new VoIP service. Will you be answering the call?


83%
NO. I ALREADY HAVE SKYPE, FACETIME, AND A PHONE PLAN.
17%
YES, I WANT TO INSTANTLY AND LITERALLY CALL PEOPLE ON THEIR BAD STATUS UPDATES.

Twitter

@mikemacaroni: As if it couldn't get any weirder. It seems like QPR's best defender, Ryan Nelsen, is set to leave (& not join Spurs) to coach Toronto FC?!

@JohnMolinaro: I SO want to give Payne benefit of doubt over Nelsen, but I have to admit I'm just not sure about it. Guess we'll find out soon if it works.

@john_peck: Paul Magder and Clayton Ruby, thank you so much for what you are doing. Deliver us from the laughing stock that is our mayor.

@WheelerTSN: Big fan of Nelsen as new #TFC HC. Payne had to bring in own guys. Glad he didn't wait. Big money offer to Nelsen works. Natural leader.

@neville_park: #Fordcourt's trending in Toronto. You're all darlings.

metro

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It may have taken 113 days (and many broken hearts) but the NHL lockout has finally come to an end. While both sides finalize details, fervent fans must impatiently wait for the games to begin. In the meantime, Metro presents five songs to get you back in the mood for hockey:

STEVE GOW
scene@metronews.ca

Time to Go, Dropkick Murphys

No other song so brilliantly highlights the anticipation of the strike's end. Dropkick Murphys, hockey enthusiasts themselves, wrote this tune as a Bruins fight song. But its spirited chant "drop the puck, it's time to go" surely speaks to all fans eager for the return of their favourite sport.

50 Mission Cap, The Tragically Hip

50 Mission Cap may be specifically about hockey hero Bill Barilko and his mysterious disappearance after leading the Maple Leafs to a Stanley Cup, but the Tragically Hip's hockey hit also speaks to a simpler, nostalgic period of the sport's history.

The Hockey Song, Stompin' Tom Connors

Stompin' Tom Connors' 1973 classic has become synonymous with the sport. Not only is it played at every NHL game, but its chorus blurts out "the best game you can name is the good ol' hockey game" and that's gospel for many Canadians.

Big League, Tom Cochrane

A song about a player whose promising hockey greatness was cut short by a car wreck, Tom Cochrane himself admits he's as proud of his 1988 hit "as anything I've ever written." Pure Canadiana, its spirit mirrors the passion of the fans.

Hit Somebody (The Hockey Song), Warren Zevon

Warren Zevon may be best known for Werewolves of London, but this quirky 2002 song about a young, talentless goon passionate to score just one goal instead of fight should be a reminder to NHLers how lucky they are to play.

DVD review

Frankenweenie

Director. Tim Burton

Stars. Winona Ryder, Catherine O'Hara, Martin Short

Tim Burton's story about a young Victor Frankenstein reviving his dead pet pooch Sparky with lightning and lab tricks is itself something of an undead awakening. Frankenweenie was also the title and subject of a short film Burton made early in his career in the 1980s, when he was a lot fresher and more creative than he is today. The original Frankenweenie short was attached to some DVD editions of The Nightmare Before Christmas, the 1993 animated film masterminded by Burton but directed by Henry Selick (Coraline). The feature-length Frankenweenie doesn't vastly improve on the short, but it does immerse us more fully into the world of young Victor (Charlie Tahan), his worried parents (Catherine O'Hara and Martin Short), shy strange girl next door (Winona Ryder) and the meddlesome townsfolk of tiny New Holland. All the usual Burton tropes are present and accounted for — monochrome stop-motion, sad eyes, deadpan drollery — as are the hat-tips to his influences, James Whale's Frankenstein and Bride of Frankenstein. It's an affectionate balance of comedy and horror, yet somewhat lacking the jolt of creativity of the original.

PETER HOWELL

Nelly Furtado is hitting the road to promote her new album, Spirit Indestructible, which came out in September. GETTY IMAGES

How Nelly got her groove back

Spirit Indestructible. Singer dug deep into her past to inspire her on her new album — her first English effort in six years

IAN GORMELY
scene@metronews.ca

Nelly Furtado's latest album, Spirit Indestructible, saw release back in September, but the Victoria singer is only now hitting the road to promote the release.

The delayed trip, which includes a string of Canadian dates, is in keeping with the drawn out creative process behind the record, her first English language effort in six years.

"It took two or three years for me to put forth what I really wanted to say on the album," she says.

After releasing a Spanish-language album on her own NelStar label in 2009 and overseeing Toronto singer-songwriter Dylan Murray's debut for the fledgling company, Furtado found it difficult to rediscover the groove that had helped produce massive international hits like I'm Like a Bird and Promiscuous.

But Furtado's material soon took on a nostalgic tone as she began digging through her past for inspiration. Rodney "Darkchild" Jerkins, who produced the majority of the album's dozen tracks, worked on many of the late-'90s R&B and hip-hop tracks Furtado grew up on.

The track Big Hoops even name-checks No Diggity, a 1996 hit by Blackstreet, an R&B group founded by Jerkins' mentor Teddy Riley. Yet the singer was oblivious to her producer's past until she found plaques commemorating his work with Aaliyah hanging in the studio hallway.

"I think that was why I was feeling so open and willing to write about stuff from the past in such a celebratory way," says Furtado.

"There was a lot of serendipity going on."

Furtado describes the final product as "quite different" from her previous outings, combining the club vibes of 2006's Timbaland-assisted Loose with the folkier leanings of her first two records.

Eclecticism, she says, has always been a big part of what she does. "It's very loud, abrasive, it's raw, and a little irreverent.

Coming full circle

Furtado points to the song Circles on her new album as the turning point in her creative process. After struggling to rediscover her creative spark, on the recommendation of a friend she teamed up with Michael Angelakos, lead singer for indie-dance crew Passion Pit. "It's a nice fusion of sounds," she says of the track. The Spirit Indestructible came soon after. "I knew it when we wrote it, it was like, 'Oh my God. This is exciting," she recalls. "And then you've got the title track."

"I've been away for a while," she says. "If I'm going to put something out I want it to be sonically creative."

Kutcher's relationship with Kunis has been one international adventure

Ashton Kutcher's jet-setting relationship with Mila Kunis continues. After hitting up Kutcher's hometown of Cedar Rapids, Iowa in late December, the pair reportedly spent the first weekend of the new year living it up in Rio de Janeiro, according to E! News. Kutcher and Kunis were spotted at the restaurant Mr. Lam in the comapany of Brazilian TV host Luciano Huck and other pals. Since the former That 70s Show co-stars started dating last year, they've spent more time on the road than at home in L.A., it appears, with lengthy residences in New York City and Rome.

Twitter

@ParisHilton
Spent the entire day going through all my closets again. My entire dining room is full of racks of clothes & boxes of handbags etc to donate

@Sethrogen
Abu Nazir's FaceTime works way better than my FaceTime ever has

@TomArnold
The more screwed up the person the more inspirational their tweets.

@kirstiealley
What would a spider eat if he lives in an empty cabinet under the sink in a guest bath? I'd like to give him a little help..what human food?

Claire Danes. ALL IMAGES GETTY

Stay-at-home parenting not for Claire Danes

Though her first child is not even a month old, Homeland star Claire Danes is already making it clear she doesn't plan to be a stay-at-home mom. "I've always wanted to have kids, but I'm glad I didn't until now. When I was thinking about (working and being a mother) originally, I was really nervous about it," Danes tells Elle magazine. "I think I would make a lousy stay-at-home mom. It just wouldn't suit me. I feel so fortunate in that I've had this arrow-straight focus that I wanted to act." Danes and husband Hugh Dancy welcomed son Cyrus on Dec. 17.

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Kanye and Kim say no to sale of first baby pics, who said yes?

THE WORD
Dorothy Robinson
scene@metronews.ca

Upon the news that Kim Kardashian and Kanye West have already turned down a $3 million paycheque for the pictures of their unborn child from an overseas tabloid, The Word thought it would be interesting to look at past celebrity baby reveals for ways they can promote Wee Little West.

Selling out (or not) to the highest bidder.

• Brad Pitt and Angelina Jolie are No. 1 in raking in cash from their offspring. In 2006, they got $4.1 million for pictures of their first biological daughter, Shiloh, and a whopping $14 million for their twins, Knox Leon and Vivienne Marcheline, in 2008. However, the couple used the payday for good — they donated the millions to charity.

• J.Lo & Marc Anthony pocketed a reported $6 million from People magazine for the rights to publish pictures of their twins, Emme Maribel Muñiz and Maximilian "Max" David Muñiz, in 2008.

• Christina Aguilera received a reported $1.5 million for her baby photos of son Max from People magazine in 2008.

• Beyoncé and Jay-Z eschewed a big pay day and instead released photos of their daughter Blue Ivy to the public via Tumblr with the statement, "We welcome you to share in our joy. Thank you for respecting our privacy during this beautiful time in our lives. The Carter family."

• And of course, they could always not release photos of their baby and enjoy the time privately (editor's note: hahahahahahahahaha!). Some big stars who haven't publicized their recent babies are Adele, The Beckhams, Ben Affleck and Jennifer Gardner, Anna Paquin and Stephen Moyer.

Bieber dedicates latest inking to Grampa

Justin Bieber

Justin Bieber's tattoo obsession continues, with the 18-year-old Canadian pop star debuting yet another patch of ink via his Instagram account earlier this week. The piece, a profile of a Native American chief, is the logo for the Stratford Cullitons junior ice hockey team. "My grandfather always took me to the Stratford Culliton every Friday night," Bieber posted along with the photo. "This is for (you), Grampa." Last week, Bieber also had a session to add embellishments to an existing tattoo of praying hands on his lower leg.

Courtney Cox and David Arquette

Arquette still Cox's 'best friend' despite divorce

Courteney Cox and David Arquette definitely win the award for most amicable divorce, as the Cougar Town star insists to Ellen DeGeneres that Arquette is still her best friend. "I appreciate David more now than I ever did," Cox says. "I mean, it's hard. I don't recommend divorce in general, but you know, he is my best friend and we've both grown and changed and I think we both appreciate each other more. I hope he does. I do." The pair separated in 2011 and filed for divorce in June but remain active parts of each other's lives.

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LIFE 3

5 ways to cut weight

Hands up everyone who plans to start the new year with a resolution about weight. Yup, that's a lot of hands. As everyone who has ever tried to lose weight knows it's not easy. With the help of Dr. Yoni Freedhoff, an Ottawa-based weight loss expert, and Dr. Arya Sharma, who holds a chair in obesity research and management at the University of Alberta, we're going to tell you about five ways to cut weight.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Watch what you drink

Cut the calories you drink. Yes, drink. People routinely forget about the calories in the fluids they imbibe, be it fruit juices, specialty coffees or alcohol, the doctors say. Unlike solid snacks, liquid calories don't fill you up. They don't trigger the brain's impulse to compensate by eating less later.

Make good decisions

Focus on behaviours, not pounds. Your weight is where it is because of your habits. Maybe you snack in front of the TV at night or you give yourself a free pass when you eat out — and you eat out a lot. Grappling with those habits is what you have to do to make inroads on weight control, Sharma says.

Sleep in, lose weight

Get more sleep. The scientific evidence is piling up that society's sleep deficit is contributing to the obesity epidemic. Study after study shows a link between too little sleep and weight gain. In part it's an issue of opportunity: A sleeping person can't eat. Put another way, the more time you are awake, the more opportunity you have to consume calories.

Don't let it come back

Assess the livability of your approach. Unless you're a lucky person who only needs to shed a couple of pounds gained on a cruise or over Christmas, if you want to lose weight chances are weight control is going to be an ongoing part of your life. So going on a drastic diet may shed the excess weight. But if you ease up, it's going to come back. "The idea that 'I'm just going to do something for a couple of weeks and lose weight'— you're just setting yourself up for failure. That weight is going to come back," Sharma says.

Take the pledge

Set realistic goals. You're not a runner but you decide your path to your ideal weight is by becoming a marathoner. Or you pledge to spend 90 minutes at the gym every day when you currently get there three or four times a month. "I think people should take small steps that are sustainable," Freedhoff says.

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Forget eating small portions, stick to a schedule for meals

New study. B.C. scientist finds that insulin levels tied to eating regularly, destroys conventional wisdom on food

CELIA MILNE
wellness@metronews.ca

Even if you're hungry, it's not necessarily food o'clock. ISTOCK PHOTOS

Ignore hunger and eat at scheduled times.

That's the advice of a B.C. scientist who unexpectedly discovered that having low insulin levels prevents weight gain. His research topples advice to eat small amounts regularly throughout the day.

"I think it's important to eat at defined meal times, which means sometimes waiting that last hour for dinner with a bit of hunger, rather than having an unhealthy snack," says Dr. James Johnson, an associate professor of cellular and physiological sciences at the University of British Columbia.

In an experiment, Johnson and colleagues fed a high-fat diet to two groups of mice. One group of mice had a normal amount of insulin and the other was bred to have half that amount.

The normal mice became fat.

The low-insulin mice were protected from weight gain because their fat cells burned more energy. The study was published in Cell Metabolism.

"We concluded that high levels of circulating insulin are required for weight gain in mammals," Johnson told Metro.

"Previously, this had not been shown directly, although multiple lines of circumstantial evidence had supported the idea."

Too little insulin can trigger diabetes, so there has to be a happy medium, he adds.

Tips

Dr. Johnson's advice to balance your own insulin levels

- **Food.** Take longer breaks between meals
- **Time of day.** Don't eat late at night.
- **Curb cravings.** Try to avoid foods that leave you craving more.

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NEW Patients Welcome

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- Women's Health

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HypnoBirthing teaches relaxation

Childbirth techniques.

Some are opting to skip the epidural and try self-hypnosis on the big day

RITA POLIAKOV
wellness@metronews.ca

When Helen Hargreaves went into labour with her first child last summer, she took two Gravols. And nothing else.

"At first, I thought birth is painful and I'll just get an epidural," said Hargreaves, a therapist based in Toronto.

It was after doing some online research on epidurals that the mother decided to avoid pain medication.

"Although they're mostly safe, (epidurals) have their own risks. I started to realize I didn't want to take those risks unless I needed to," said Hargreaves, whose wife supported her decision.

The therapist, who opted for a home birth, eventually turned to HypnoBirthing, a form of self-hypnosis that she initially balked at.

"I thought it sounded super flaky," Hargreaves said, adding that she eventually decided to give the method a try.

According to Marie Berwald, a practitioner in Regina, HypnoBirthing teaches women birthing relaxation skills.

"There's a lot of misconception around (hypnosis)," Berwald said. "What it means is you put yourself into an alternative state of consciousness. Even that sounds crazy, but that's innately human. During the day, we do things like drive home on auto pilot," she said, adding that it's this state — somewhere between daydreaming and autopilot — that works best for childbirth.

"Most women start off feeling somewhere between apprehensive to full out petrified," she said of preconceived notions of childbirth.

Berwald tries to instill a sense of calm in her clients, partly by using imagery and word associations.

"What we know is that all the coping mechanisms the body already has work better when you're in (a relaxed) state," she said, explaining that, when a woman is calm, she's more likely to experience a release of endorphins, or "natural pain blockers."

HypnoBirthing was developed in the U.S. by Marie Mongan and came to Canada around 1993. According to 1,227 birth reports collected by the HypnoBirthing Institute, founded by Mongan, between October 2005 and January 2009, around 83 per cent of mothers using the method in the U.S. didn't use pain medication.

Leigh Baetz-Craft, a birthing unit nurse at Toronto's Sunnybrook Health Sciences Centre, has seen a handful of women use the technique.

"To me, it's a focused, deep relaxation (technique) with guided imagery," she said, adding that some mothers still opt for pain medication eventually.

"Being flexible in pain management options is really important. HypnoBirthing may be another tool in the toolbox. I haven't heard of any (risks)."

For Hargreaves, the method gave her a sense of control.

"(Giving birth) was still painful, but it was manageable," she said.

For a list of Canadian practitioners, visit hypnobirthing.com and click on practitioner directory.

Terms

HypnoBirthing techniques work to change the way women perceive birth. Changing a mother's vocabulary is an important part of that. Here are a few HypnoBirthing terms:

- **Painful contraction.** A surge or wave
- **Pushing.** Birth breathing
- **False labour.** Practice labour.

Self-hypnosis may seem like a flaky idea, but HypnoBirthing is gaining traction among the healthcare community. ISTOCK PHOTOS

Best Health

Why celeb cleanses don't work

BEST HEALTH MINUTE
Bonnie Munday
Editor-in-chief
Best Health Magazine

In the latest issue of Best Health magazine, on newsstands now, our regular columnist Dr. Susan Biali outlines why she does not recommend these often celebrity-endorsed weight-loss plans.

1. The "high" from a cleanse is misleading.
While the idea of a cleanse may be appealing, restrictive regimens don't actually clean your body, and they could even starve you of nutrients. Having only a few foods — for example, maple syrup and cayenne pepper — for days at a time is essentially a starvation diet. When we are starved, once the hunger pangs pass we feel euphoric. That euphoria is like a natural anesthetic that protects us from the pain of a starving body. We need real nutrients to survive and thrive.

2. Any weight loss is short-lived.
Cleansing to lose weight is essentially crash dieting. Of course you'll lose weight if you consume very few calories, but this type of dieting can potentially put your health at risk. And remember, rapid weight loss rebounds quickly, so you'll regain the weight as soon as you go back to normal eating.

3. Your body detoxes naturally.
No special smoothie will detoxify your body. Our kidneys and liver are constantly filtering bodily fluids, eliminating toxins and waste products. Fasting may damage these organs.

People spend a lot of money on packaged cleanses. You can do your own healthy detox, which is guaranteed to work without scary consequences, simply by making good food choices. Stay away from processed foods, sugar and even alcohol as much as possible. Eat lots of healthy proteins, good fats and fibre, fruit and vegetables.

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Sandwich so good it might make you rethink meat

ROSE REISMAN
for more, visit
rosereisman.com

After tasting this sandwich you might decide to go vegetarian! The grilled vegetables, pesto, and brie are a sensational combination. And, yes, you can enjoy brie when you're eating light — just watch the amounts.

For the rolls, I like to use either focaccia or sourdough rolls.

If using store-bought pesto, remember it is higher in fat and calories than my homemade version; use a smaller amount or thin it out with a bit of water.

This recipe serves eight. PER KRISTIANSEN, FROM ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS)

1. Preheat oven to 425 F. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil.

2. Place onion, red pepper, mushroom and zucchini on the prepared baking sheet. Spray lightly with cooking oil. Roast vegetables, turning once, for 25 to 30 minutes or until tender. Remove and allow to cool.

3. For the pesto, place all basil leaves, Parmesan, pine nuts, cream cheese, garlic, stock, and olive oil in the bowl of a small food processor and purée until smooth.

4. Combine 2 tbsp pesto and sour cream in a small bowl.

5. Cut roasted vegetables into pieces that fit the shape of the bread. Place in a bowl and toss with the oil, vinegar and garlic.

6. Spread the pesto mixture over the bottom half of each roll. Top with the vegetable mixture and brie. Replace the top half of the roll and cut in half to serve. **ROSE REISMAN'S COMPLETE LIGHT KITCHEN (WHITECAP BOOKS) BY ROSE REISMAN**

Ingredients

- 1/2 large red onion, sliced
- 1 red bell pepper, cut in 8 wedges
- 1 large portobello mushroom, thickly sliced
- 1 zucchini, cut in 3 slices lengthwise
- 2 tbsp basil pesto sauce
- 2 tbsp low-fat sour cream
- 1 tbsp olive oil
- 2 tsp balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 tsp minced fresh garlic
- 4 large rolls (each 3 1/2 oz), split
- 2 oz brie cheese, thinly sliced

Basil Pesto Sauce (Makes 3/4 cup)

- 1 cup fresh basil leaves
- 2 tbsp grated Parmesan cheese
- 1 tbsp toasted pine nuts
- 2 tbsp light cream cheese
- 1 tsp minced fresh garlic
- 3 tbsp chicken stock or water
- 2 tbsp olive oil

Health Solutions

High water content

NUTRI-BITES
Theresa Albert, DHN, RNCP
myfriendinfood.com

Canadian winters are parching because the heated indoor air is as dry as the desert. The double downside is that when you catch a bug, your need for liquids goes even higher.

Your hair, skin and lips show it on the outside, but the inside is crawling toward the oasis too.

Drinking your eight glasses a day is a bit of a myth, given that the foods you eat provide lots of water as well.

Increasing the high water choices helps beat dehydration with the added bonus of filling you up and preventing hunger. Choose wisely from this list of low cal/high water foods.

- **Watermelon**
- **Oranges/lemons**
- **Kiwi**
- **Berries**
- **Apples/pears**
- **Yogurt**
- **Leafy Greens: iceberg, romaine, kale, spinach, collards**
- **Tomatoes**
- **Cucumbers**
- **Celery**
- **Cabbage**
- **Broccoli**
- **Low sodium broth soups**

Of course, there is always a nice big bottle of sparkling water on your desk in the a.m. that must be finished by the end of the day.

That's the best cue to making sure you are getting enough. You will know by the colour of your urine, the lighter and clearer the better. **THERESA ALBERT IS A FOOD COMMUNICATIONS CONSULTANT AND PRIVATE NUTRITIONIST IN TORONTO. SHE IS @THERESAALBERT ON TWITTER AND FOUND DAILY AT MYFRIENDINFOOD.COM**

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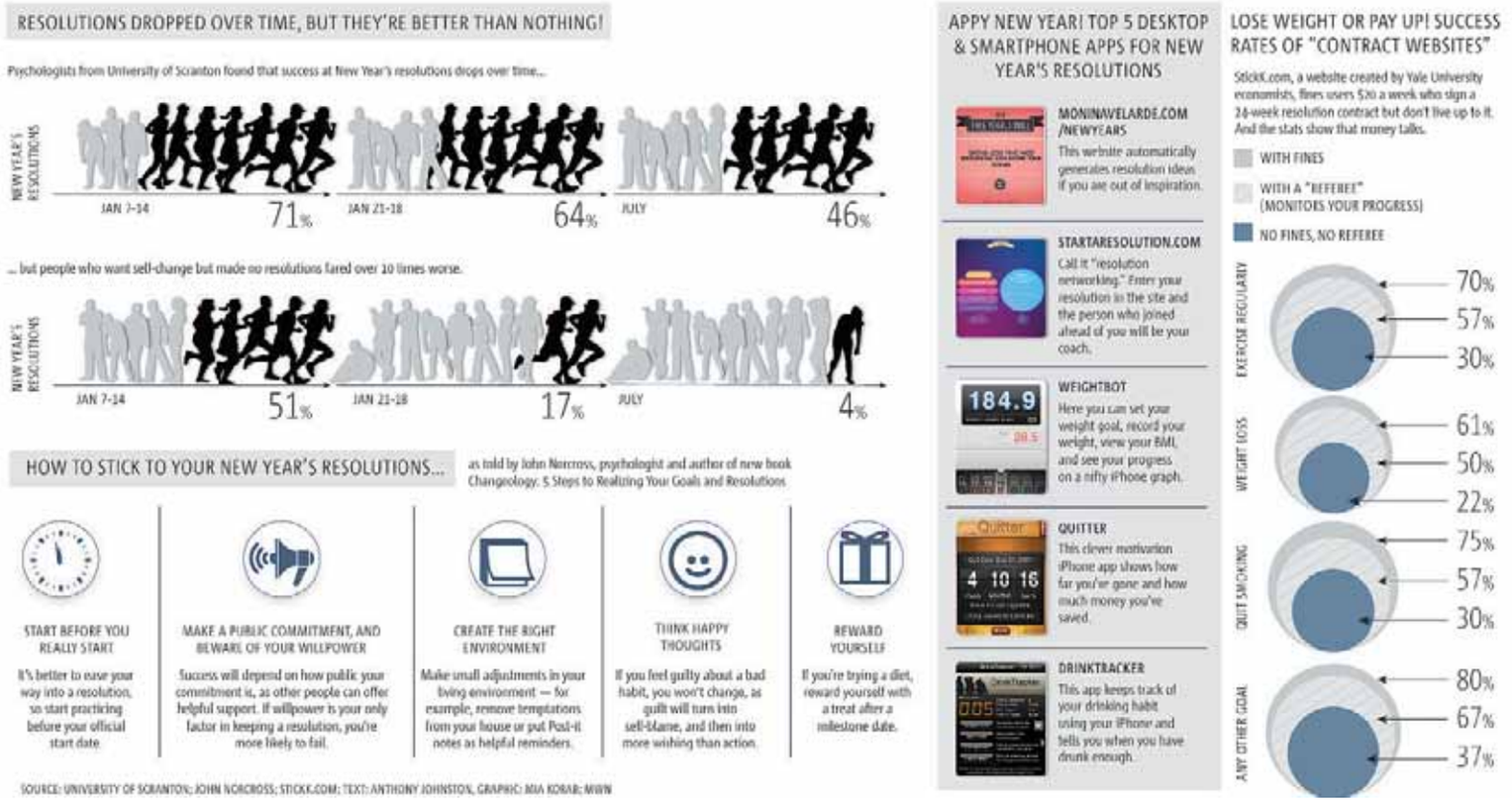
NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS - HOW TO STICK TO THEM

New Year's resolutions doomed to fail? Bah humbug! You are 10 times more likely to self-change if you make a resolution than making no promise at all, research says.


RESOLUTIONS DROPPED OVER TIME, BUT THEY'RE BETTER THAN NOTHING!
Psychologists from University of Scranton found that success at New Year's resolutions drops over time...
NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS
JAN 7-14
71%
JAN 21-28
64%
JULY
46%
... but people who want self-change but made no resolutions fared over 10 times worse.
NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS
JAN 7-14
51%
JAN 21-28
17%
JULY
4%
HOW TO STICK TO YOUR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS...
as told by John Norcross, psychologist and author of new book Changeology: 5 Steps to Realizing Your Goals and Resolutions
START BEFORE YOU REALLY START
It's better to ease your way into a resolution, so start practicing before your official start date.
MAKE A PUBLIC COMMITMENT, AND BEWARE OF YOUR WILLPOWER
Success will depend on how public your commitment is, as other people can offer helpful support. If willpower is your only factor in keeping a resolution, you're more likely to fail.
CREATE THE RIGHT ENVIRONMENT
Make small adjustments in your living environment — for example, remove temptations from your house or put Post-it notes as helpful reminders.
THINK HAPPY THOUGHTS
If you feel guilty about a bad habit, you won't change, as guilt will turn into self-blame, and then into more wishing than action.
REWARD YOURSELF
If you're trying a diet, reward yourself with a treat after a milestone date.
SOURCE: UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON; JOHN NORCROSS; STICK.COM; TEXT: ANTHONY JOHNSTON, GRAPHIC: BIA KOBAB; MBW
APPY NEW YEAR! TOP 5 DESKTOP & SMARTPHONE APPS FOR NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS
MONINAVELARDE.COM/NEWYEARS
This website automatically generates resolution ideas if you are out of inspiration.
STARTARESOLUTION.COM
Call it "resolution networking." Enter your resolution in the site and the person who joined ahead of you will be your coach.
WEIGHTBOT
Here you can set your weight goal, record your weight, view your BMI, and see your progress on a nifty iPhone graph.
QUITTER
This clever motivation iPhone app shows how far you've gone and how much money you've saved.
DRINKTRACKER
This app keeps track of your drinking habit using your iPhone and tells you when you have drunk enough.
LOSE WEIGHT OR PAY UP! SUCCESS RATES OF "CONTRACT WEBSITES"
StickK.com, a website created by Yale University economists, fines users $20 a week who sign a 24-week resolution contract but don't live up to it. And the stats show that money talks.
WITH FINES
WITH A "REFEREE" (MONITORS YOUR PROGRESS)
NO FINES, NO REFEREE
EXERCISE REGULARLY
70%
57%
30%
WEIGHT LOSS
61%
50%
22%
QUIT SMOKING
75%
57%
30%
ANY OTHER GOAL
80%
67%
37%

New year's resolutions worth thousands

FUN AND FRUGAL
Lesley Scorgie
money@metronews.ca

Exhale a sigh of temporary fiscal relief — the holidays are finally over! Now it's time to deal with the financial aftermath of such a joyous, fun-filled and financially catastrophic holiday season.

If you're feeling maxed out and are dreading the delivery of your January credit card and bank account statements, you'll benefit from a New Year's Resolution which will save you thousands: a 2013 frugality diet.

Before you sell your worldly possessions to pay off your Best Buy loan, go Zen for just a moment. Take 10 deep breaths and know that you have the ability to reduce your monetary stress and grow your financial security. Join the ranks of thousands of North Americans that report feeling financially optimistic about 2013.

Start by determining your bottom line. Once you know where you stand, you can create a plan to grow your net worth. Download your favourite net worth tracking tool to determine what you own and owe. ALL major banks have free online calculators, but if you want to build your own, simply total up your assets (own) and subtract your liabilities (owe).

Focus on the highest impact savings opportunities. If you've got two cars and could get by with one, sell the other. Rent out unoccupied space in your house. Start eating at home rather than buying food from restaurants. Become a smarter shopper using coupons, cutting back and buying items on sale. Sell household or personal items you could live without, like an extra television.

Face your debts head-on. On a spreadsheet, list who you owe money to, the interest rate and balance. Each month, pay a little extra on the highest interest debt until it's paid off. Then pay extra on the next highest interest debt. Remember, you'll have extra money from your previous debt's regular payment. DO NOT rack up additional debt while paying off the existing.

Retirement approaches fast and growing funds for the future is critical. Take advantage of employer sponsored retirement savings programs like pensions and RRSPs.

Live lean in 2013.

Will debt settlement companies really solve your financial woes?

Money. Ontario joins other provinces aiming to regulate the operations of these companies

YOUR MONEY
Alison Griffiths
money@metronews.ca

Any request for money up front is a red flag when looking for a debt settlement organization. ISTOCK IMAGES

An Ottawa debt settlement company promised Holly Wang complete debt relief. The reality didn't live up to her expectations. The Kingston, Ont., nurse began the spiral into debt 15 years ago when she and her husband bought their first house. Twins and a divorce soon followed and her deadbeat husband made only sporadic child support payments.

"I was pretty depressed about it and got into gambling ,which was the worst thing but at the time it seemed like a way out. I also bought lottery tickets almost every day."

As her debt situation worsened the stress made Wang sick and she was increasingly absent from her job as a nursing home supervisor. Her employer finally ran out of patience and let her go.

In desperation, Wang turned to a debt settlement company. She paid $500 in up front fees then $300 monthly into an account with the company. She was told to ignore her creditors until she had built up sufficient funds to make a deal with them. In the end, only two of her seven creditors were willing to settle. She paid her money for nothing.

Wang's experience is all too common. "Essentially, debt settlement companies have charged huge fees, sometimes in the thousands, made broken promises to settle debts for consumers and not followed through on their claims to be able to work with creditors," wrote Laurie Campbell, CEO of the not-for-profit charity, Credit Canada Debt Solutions (CCDS) in a recent blog.

On Friday, the Ontario government joined Alberta, Manitoba and Nova Scotia by introducing regulations to curb these companies, more than 20 of which operate in the province. Still at the proposal stage, the Ontario government is aiming to ban up-front fees, limit total fees collected, improve the transparency of contracts and allow a 10-day cooling off period.

Canadians in any province needing help with their debts should ensure the organization is a not-for-profit charity. Any request for money up front is a red flag, as are excessive promises to eliminate debt or settle with creditors for pennies on the dollar. Also, don't believe assurances that your credit score won't be affected.

If in doubt, contact CCDS (www.creditcanada.com), or other member agencies of the Canadian Association of Credit Counselling Services (caccs.ca).

Contact Alison at griffiths.alison@gmail.com or alisongriffiths.ca

Putting the boom back in business

With age comes opportunity.
There are plenty of industries that would benefit from your life experience

YLVA
VAN BUUREN
careerbear.com

OK, you just turned 50. Or 55. Or maybe 60. Perhaps you've been downsized. Maybe you stayed home to raise your family and now would like to get into the workforce. Or maybe you're just bored at your work and are looking for something different. Whatever the reason, you're ready to get out there when a thought hits you: Will someone hire me at my age?

The short answer? Yes. In fact, boomers are better suited to some careers than any other age group

"A boomer's second act is usually based on specific interests and expertise," explains Donna Stevenson, owner of the recruitment firm Boomer Match to Business, bm2b.ca.

"Boomers tend to seek out what they like to do now — business-wise or personally."

The best opportunities lie in the leisure, health and wellness, and financial services areas.

Could the organization you've been volunteering for use your expertise to their advantage? Hand them your resumé! ISTOCK

Retirement planning

Who knows the financial needs of retirees better than boomers? If you have financial expertise, this may be a great area for you.

Client care services for seniors

"I've had people who used to be in human resources move into this area where they work with seniors in the health care industry," says Stevenson. With so many of their own parents in long-term care, boomers understand the challenges and the rewards firsthand.

Not-for-profit

Many boomers already volunteer for not-for-profit organizations and discover that there are paying jobs as well. "They're always looking for senior people with expertise they can apply quickly," says Stevenson.

Sales into the C-suite

If you have a knack for sales, you may find a position selling to CEOs, CFOs and other high level people in businesses and other organizations.

College instructor

Teaching what you know is a great job for boomers. You might need to take a course to sharpen teaching skills. When looking for work, start with the trade school or college that you went to.

Blogger

One way to utilize your skills is to blog about them. This can lead to speaking and other writing engagements — it's all about mining your expertise. "As long as you are capable of articulating, then away you go," says Stevenson.

Travel tour leader

"Boomers I know get into adventure travel because they know how to lead and manage huge groups of people from a business perspective. So they leverage their business expertise with a personal interest — and it works."

The great web of work

- Career Bear is Canada's premier source for people who want a new career, but aren't sure where to start.
- Visitors to the website can browse careers by industry, salary, outlook or alphabetical listing and find job profiles, quick career facts and training programs near them.

Got the write stuff?

"As long as you are capable of articulating, then away you go."

Donna Stevenson
Owner of recruitment firm Boomer Match to Business on starting a blog.

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Typing up a lecture may now be the norm, but the link between scribing and success cannot be written off. ISTOCK

Need a successful study plan? Give yourself a hand

Pen and paper.
Movement and memory a winning classroom combination

What do fingers and hands have to do with how well studied material can be recalled?

According to research, the physical act of holding a pen and writing something out by hand stimulates critical activity in specific areas of the brain.

In a recent study, one group learned the alphabet by writing the letters out by hand.

The other group read solely off computers. The group who wrote out the letters by hand had better recall and scored better on tests.

According to Dr. Nick Whitehead, the CEO and founder of Oxford Learning, these studies prove what educators have long known about studying and remembering,

"There are many different ways to approach the process of studying, but one of the best-known has always been to create study notes using pen and paper," he said.

It may seem an old-fashioned practice given the abundance of personal technology that students have at their fingertips, but the act of physically writing creates a motor memory in the brain that improves recall.

Not only do study notes help students organize the material, but the act of holding the pen and writing notes makes the study process active rather than passive.

NEWS CANADA

Duly noted

How to create study notes

- Grab a pen and paper
- Read over all in-class or textbook notes.
- Write down subject headings, subheadings, and bolded or key words.
- Focus on writing down the ideas or concepts that are the most challenging or that are the most difficult to remember.

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NEW GOALS FOR A NEW YEAR

MAKE A RESOLUTION FOR ATTAINABLE ACCOMPLISHMENTS

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The start of the winter semester is a great time to make academic new year's resolutions, but how can you ensure your grades rise and your stress levels fall?

Miriam Unruh, director of the Academic Learning Centre at the University of Manitoba, says start by making goals that are realistic, specific and testable. For example, lifting a GPA by 0.3 might be doable, but a full point might not.

"Increasing a GPA is a longer-term goal and requires that a student first determine if the goal is attainable," she says.

Create short-term goals to step up toward the bigger one. "Short-term goals might include increasing the number of hours spent studying a week, increasing the number and variety of problem questions done daily, reviewing chapter questions weekly, reviewing class notes after each class, or even going to class. Specific goals like these can be integrated into a daily and weekly to-do list, and can be checked off as they are done," Unruh says.

Try to create a more even course load so you are studying from the start, instead of playing catch-up at the end of the year. "Also, students often assume that reading and rereading and/or re-copying notes is enough, but this isn't true. In order to remember information, it is important to review the notes 'actively' by asking questions, summarizing major sections, and understanding how the various components of a process fit together," she says.

This helps you learn how the details create the big picture.

Brian Hotson, director of the Writing Centre at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, says the most common problem he sees is poor time management. "(Students) feel things like GPA are important, but the best way to improve it is to be able to effectively manage their time."

Visit the student centre and connect with a study coach who can show you how to raise your skills. An adviser can help you plan out the semester so you can pace yourself and avoid cramming.

Hotson urges students to take advantage of office hours and meet their instructors. "The best thing a student can do is to bring a paper that has already been marked and say, 'Here's what I've done. Can you help me see where I've improved?'"

Do this at the start of term so you are proactively improving this term's grades, rather than trying to fix a mess at the end of term.

– Jon Tattrie

BRIDGE TO MORE SKILLS

U OF T PHYSICAL THERAPIST PROGRAM

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO PHOTO

Canada is home to many physical therapists educated outside of the country. However, not all of them can practise here. Some require additional knowledge and skills to meet Canada's entry-to-practice standards.

If you are one of these talented people, you can get the training you need at the University of Toronto.

U of T's department of physical therapy is the host site for the Ontario Internationally Educated Physical Therapy Bridging (OIEPB) program, funded through the Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, with additional support from Citizenship and Immigration Canada.

For Nada Khairallah, a graduate of the program, it provided exactly the mix of hard and soft skills she needed. "I had eight years of experience as a physiotherapist in my home country, Lebanon," Khairallah says. "But it was difficult to attain my physiotherapy registration here in Canada.

"The program taught me Canadian communication skills and documentation style. Its ongoing workplace-integration support helped me to create a professional network. This helped me find a job even before I'd attained my independent practice registration."

Today, Khairallah is a fully registered physiotherapist practising at the William Osler Health Centre.

The bridging program has two streams — a modular bridging program, and a 10-month, part-time comprehensive bridging program. The modular program is offered throughout 2013. The next comprehensive program begins April 29; the program is currently accepting applications for the Jan. 12 and March 2 admission assessment days.

The University of Toronto will hold an information evening Jan. 16 at 7 p.m., at the Rehabilitation Sciences Building (500 University Ave.). For more, email iept@utoronto.ca or phone 416-946-8560. You can also visit physicaltherapy.utoronto.ca/iept/oiepb.

Physical Therapy
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
Ontario Internationally Educated Physical Therapy
BRIDGING PROGRAM

Ontario Internationally Educated Physical Therapy Bridging Program

The OIEPB Program is designed to provide educational opportunities for physical therapists educated outside of Canada, who already possess specified qualifications, to develop the additional knowledge, skills and clinical reasoning required to meet Canadian physiotherapy entry-to-practice standards.

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THINK BIG

WITH CENTENNIAL BUSINESS PROGRAM

ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

Today's businessperson can make a difference like never before. By focusing on people — not just profits — and by thinking big, they can improve the world they live in and be successful at the same time. It's the ultimate dream, but it isn't easy to do.

If this is the way you want to do business, Centennial College has an option for you — the three-year business administration – entrepreneurship program.

"Graduates of this program will be able to start businesses of their own," says Drew Smylie, program co-ordinator for entrepreneurship and business administrative programs. "Or they can work within an entrepreneurial organization in which innovative, new products and processes are developed by intrapreneurial employees, using principles of sustainability and innovation."

This dual focus on sustainability and innovation — and the belief that they can be fostered in any kind of business environment — is a hallmark of the program. Its students will learn to recognize and assess new opportunities. They will learn how to foster and function in a business culture that encourages ideas. They will develop a thorough understanding of ethical decision-making and the role it plays in good business.

Yet, they will also master the fundamentals of good business. Graduates of the business administration – entrepreneurship program will know how to develop business plans, make business presentations, and manage projects, too. They will enter the workforce job ready.

The business administration – entrepreneurship program lasts three years (six semesters) and will be conducted at Centennial College's Progress Campus in Toronto. Centennial also offers a three-year, nine-semester co-op variation of the program.

To learn more about both, visit centennialcollege.ca, or watch a program-specific video on YouTube. (Just input "Centennial College Entrepreneurship" into the search field and you will find it).

Enrolment for the business administration – entrepreneurship program, winter term began Jan. 7. However, you can apply for either the May or September intake at ontariocolleges.ca.

NATURAL FIT

Centennial College's Institute of Global Citizenship and Equity (GC&E) will focus on global citizenship and social justice education — a natural fit with the business administration – entrepreneurship program curriculum.

That is why graduates of the business administration – entrepreneurship program will possess not only a diploma, but a GC&E portfolio as well. This portfolio, which gives graduates a competitive edge, will be used to demonstrate competencies to employers. To learn more about the institute and the GC&E portfolio, visit centennialcollege.ca.

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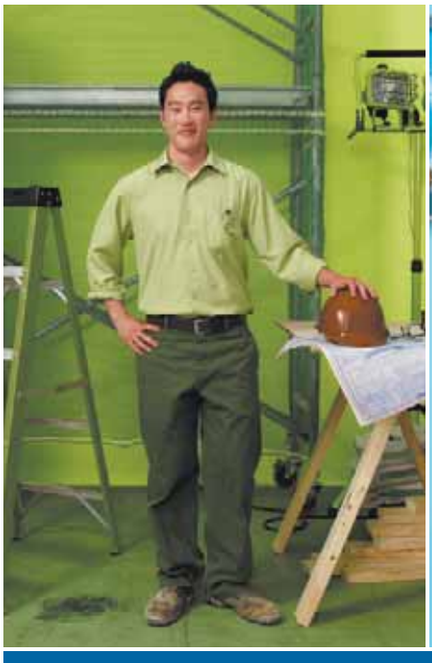

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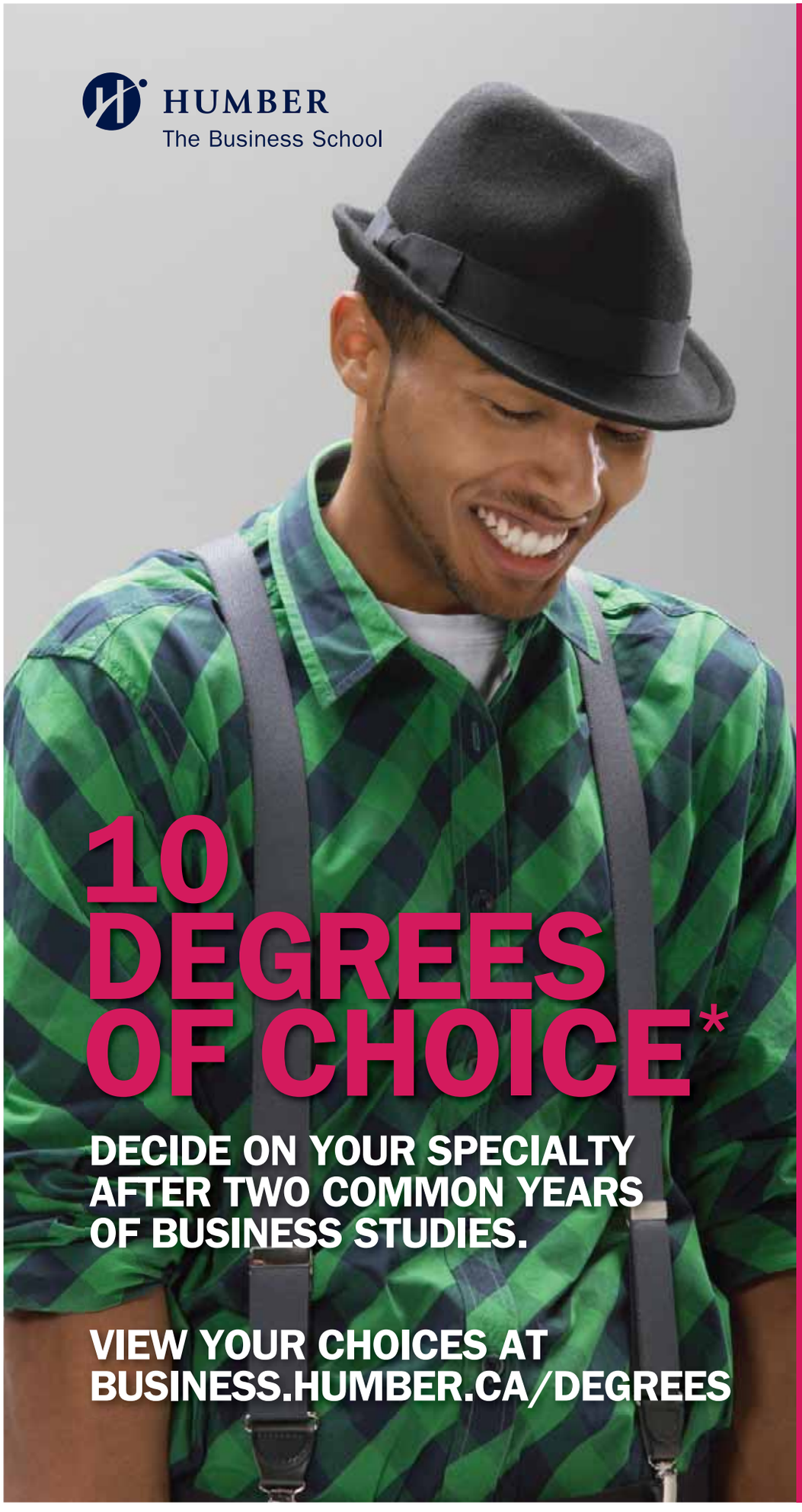

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COMPETE ON A GLOBAL STAGE

GET THE BUSINESS SKILLS YOU NEED AT SHERIDAN COLLEGE

Today's businesspeople deal with partners, suppliers, and clients from all over the world. This creates unique challenges. And Sheridan College's bachelor of applied business in global business management prepares you for them.

This four-year degree program is traditional in some ways. It is held in the classroom, putting students face-to-face with instructors. It includes two, four-month co-op work placements. It grounds students in the fundamentals of business practice, much as any bachelor of commerce does. But it also puts emphasis on the skills they need to compete around the world.

What seems like a good deal to one group of people may not to another — and products perfectly suited to one market may bomb somewhere else. That is why students in global business management are taught to consider perspectives other than their own. They learn how to earn the trust of those with whom they work, and how to analyze different countries and regions, identify potential market opportunities, and craft appropriate business plans.

SHERIDAN COLLEGE PHOTO

"Part of what distinguishes this program is its focus on soft skills," says program co-ordinator Charles Minken.

"Employers look for graduates with not only the requisite technical knowledge, but also the ability to adapt easily to change, network, think creatively, solve problems through critical thinking, and communicate effectively, both verbally and in writing. We help our students develop these skills through case studies, real industry projects, guest speakers, and more. They enter the workplace prepared for the challenges of global business, and attractive to employers looking to hire. It is our objective that our graduates be employment ready."

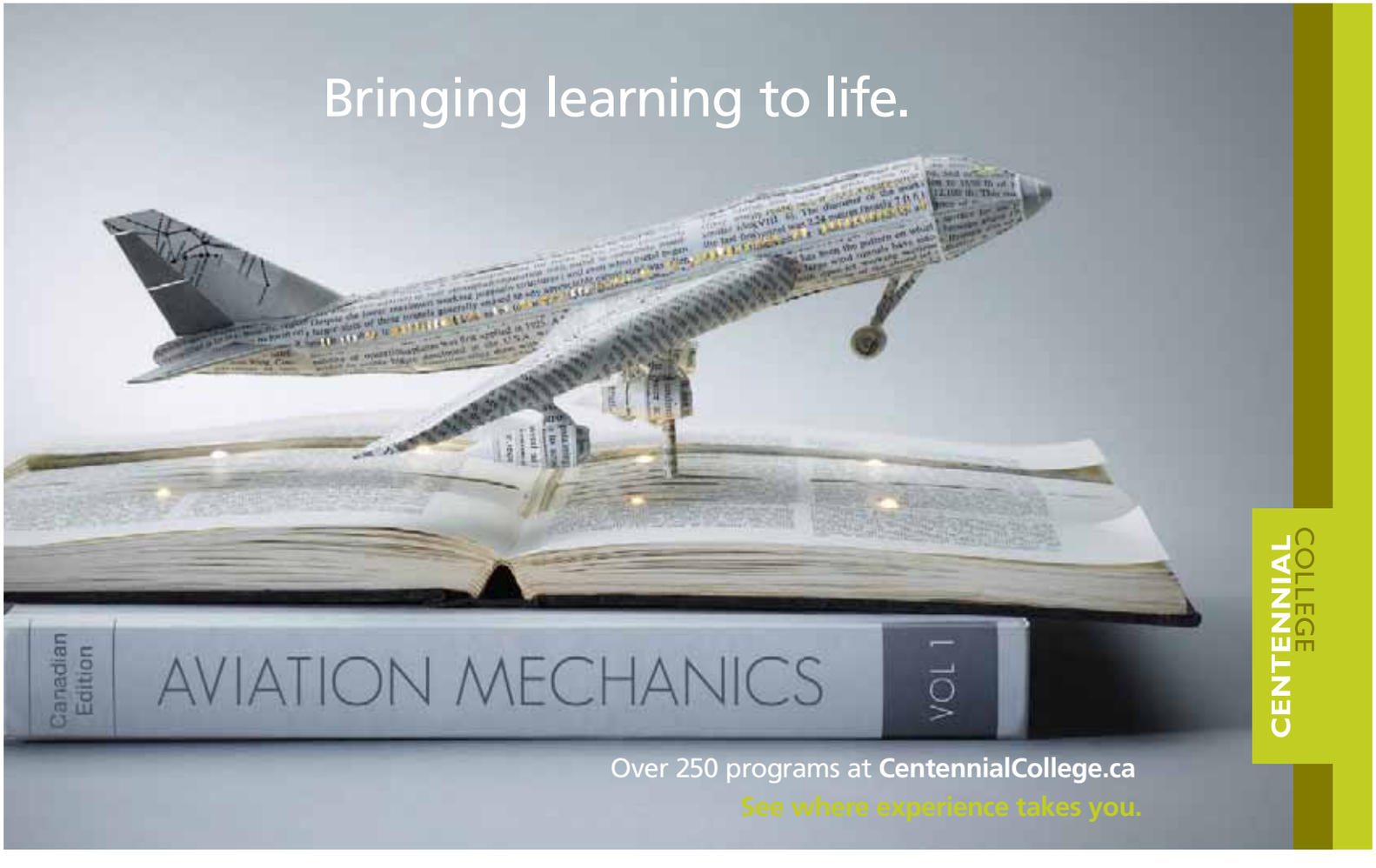
New classes for this program begin in September 2013 at Sheridan's Hazel McCallion Campus in Mississauga.

To learn more about the bachelor of applied business in global business management, contact Charles Minken at charles.minken@sheridancollege.ca. You can also visit sheridancollege.ca.

SKY IS THE LIMIT

Students earning a bachelor's degree in global business management at Sheridan College have the chance to earn something else, too, thanks to a unique partnership between Sheridan and the nearby Brampton Flight Centre (BFC).

To learn more about this opportunity, visit bramptonflightcentre.com.



CHALLENGES AWAIT

BE PREPARED WITH THE BUSINESS SCHOOL AT HUMBER

HUMBER COLLEGE PHOTO

The business world awaits you. But you need to be ready. With its combination of industry-focused diploma programs and practical instruction, The Business School, part of Humber College, can help you prepare for the challenges to come.

"The Business School's two- and three-year diploma programs are designed to meet business and industry needs," says Laurie Turner, associate dean. "We look at employment trends and determine where our graduates will best be able to find jobs. Then our business programs help them fill those vacancies."

All faculty at The Business School are hired based on their degree of industry experience. Many still maintain positions in the business world: Teaching part time and using their day-to-day experiences to help illustrate concepts in the classroom. Some of their courses also feature guest speakers, and even field trips, to further strengthen the link between in-class study and real-world business operations.

The Business School's small class sizes ensure that instructors and students get to know each other well. Instructors prepare all their own tests and mark all student assignments. They maintain regular office hours, too, so students in need of extra help can get it directly. (Humber itself offers further support, should students find themselves struggling with writing, mathematics, or accounting work).

There is, of course, no substitute for on-the-job experience. That is why every student in a Business School diploma program completes a mandatory work placement. In addition to practical training, these placements provide the student with the soft skills every successful businessperson needs: Resumé writing, interview etiquette, networking, and more. A successful work placement allows students to graduate with real job experience, which makes getting a career started much easier.

Each diploma program at The Business School has an advisory board of its own, made up of industry experts, who meet regularly to review curriculum and provide input. Courses are reviewed annually, as well, to ensure they offer students the most current information possible.

The business world continues to evolve, and so do The Business School's diploma programs. To learn more, visit business.humber.ca.

HUMBER COLLEGE PHOTO

LEARN HOW BUSINESS WORKS

"Our diploma programs put students on the fast-track to a career," says Laurie Turner, associate dean at The Business School, part of Humber College. "These programs focus on essential business skills, requiring fewer general education courses than degree programs do."

Students get in, learn what they need, and get out into the business world — where they belong.

Humber's flexible scheduling makes a variety of learning options possible for them. The Business School offers many of its courses both in-class, during the day or evening, and online — and both full time and part time. Many of the students in two-year diploma programs work part time while they take classes.

The Business School offers three-year diploma programs as well. Students in these programs study the same core competencies as those in two-year programs, but with additional emphasis placed on strategic thinking. Graduates possess a thorough understanding of how business works, but also learn the skills needed to position their business enterprise for future success.

If graduates wish to continue their education past the diploma level, they can do that, too. The Business School makes it easy to leverage their diploma credits toward a business degree.

Many of The Business School's diploma programs are offered multiple times per year — meaning that a student could complete a two-year program in only four terms (16 months). For more information on these programs, and how to apply for one, visit business.humber.ca.

Those interested can also check the website to learn more about The Business School's next open house in April, or to schedule a campus tour.

A DESIRE TO SUCCEED

Students at The Business School, part of Humber College, come from all walks of life. They are diverse in their outlooks and their goals. But they all share a desire to succeed.

Just ask Paul Crowe, a graduate of The Business School's three-year business administration program, class of 2004. Today, Crowe is a partner at BNOTIONS, a Toronto-based technology company, where he helps some of Canada's largest brands achieve their online business and communications objectives.

Crowe has fond memories of Humber, from volunteer work and athletics to the many late nights and weekends he spent working on team projects with his fellow students.

"The practical knowledge we gained at Humber — the experience working with large teams with diverse backgrounds, as well as the networking opportunities — it prepared us for the world of business," Crowe says.

"I gained a solid background in business management and marketing, which I was able to turn into a successful career in advertising. My years in advertising, in turn, allowed me to learn from, and work with, incredible people. All of that, combined, have allowed me to be successful in my role today."

Crowe also sits on an advisory committee for the business administration program, where he discusses and reviews the direction of the program, helping ensure it remains effective and competitive.

What does the existence of an advisory committee like this one say about The Business School's approach to course design? "It says they aren't operating in a vacuum," Crowe says.

"At Humber's Business School, the opinions of industry and people in the workforce really matter."

HUMBER COLLEGE PHOTO

ISTOCKPHOTO/THINKSTOCK

CAREER BUILDING BLOCKS

GET THEM AT GEORGE BROWN

When it comes time to hire, leading construction executives look for two things — knowledge of construction science, and knowledge of management. Yet, there is only one degree program in Ontario designed to teach both: George Brown College's bachelor of applied technology – construction science and management.

This four-year degree program allows graduates to maximize their employability by mastering management skills that engineers are rarely taught. They receive the chance to test those skills, too, through a semester-long, paid co-op placement to be completed at a construction site, or the offices of a construction firm, supplier, or manufacturer, depending on the student's area of interest.

Students are also exposed to the materials, systems, and products that make sustainable construction practices possible. Employers expect new hires to possess this knowledge already; by learning it in class, graduates are positioned favourably in a job market with many new openings. This hands-on learning is made possible through George Brown's variety of on-site facilities.

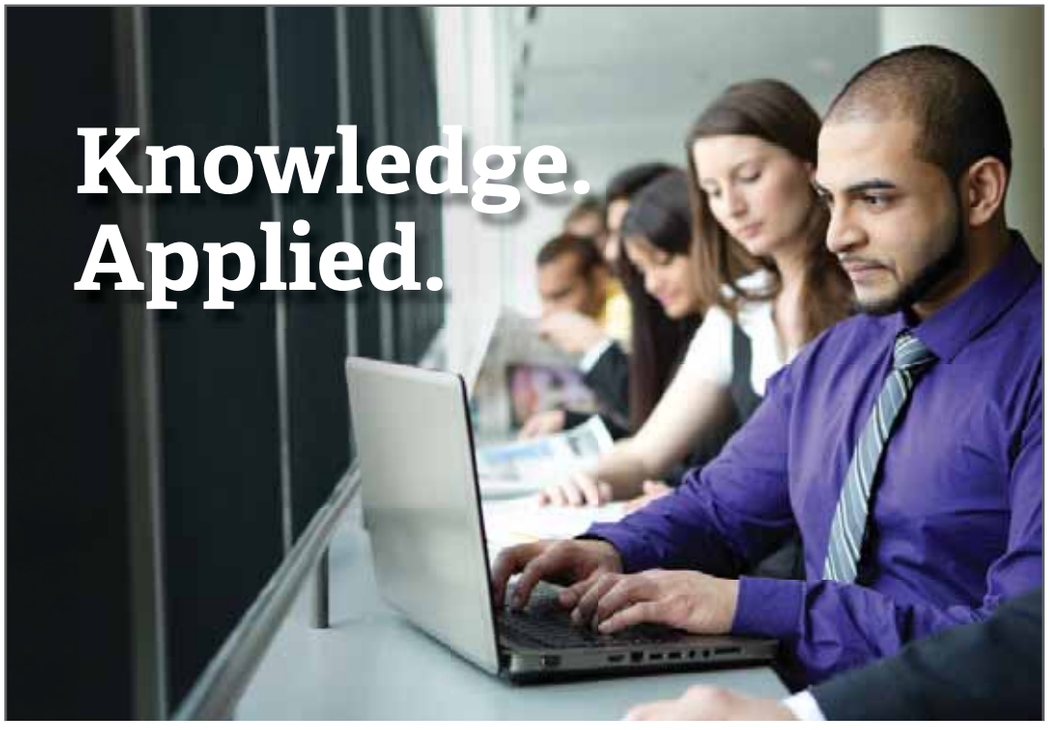
"With the help of the industry liaison office, and my professor, I received interviews with nine construction firms for my co-op semester," says graduate Jonathan Graf, now a project engineer with Kenaidan Contracting. "By my sixth interview, I already had four job offers. The skills I learned at George Brown College, along with my co-op experience, helped guarantee my future success. George Brown really does get you the job."

The college's strong industry partnerships ensure the construction science and management program remains practical and reflective of current construction industry practices. Its research and development efforts are part of this strategic vision, too.

"Our construction science and management degree program promotes the use of innovative technologies in the design and construction sector, including building information modelling (BIM)," says Clint Kissoon, chair, schools of Architectural Studies and Construction Management and Trades.

"Our aim is to educate both businesses and individuals in the implementation of current and emerging technologies, through research and development embedded in the program curriculum. We achieve this through strong collaborative efforts from our industry partners, students, faculty, and staff at George Brown."

New classes for the bachelor of applied technology – construction science and management degree program don't begin until September. But if you are interested in registering, you should begin the process now. You can start by visiting georgebrown.ca to learn more the program. Then, if you are ready to register, you can do so at ocas.ca.



A great education isn't just about gaining knowledge. It's about being able to apply knowledge in the real world in creative and innovative ways.

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FRENCH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PROVEN TO BE SUCCESSFUL

FRENCH LANGUAGE EDUCATION PHOTO

Bilingual children grow up to be successful adults: The numbers prove it. Through French Language Education in Ontario (FLE), your son or daughter can be one of them.

French Language Education is much more than French immersion. It encompasses nearly 500 public and Catholic elementary schools and high schools in Ontario, along with 11 post-secondary institutions — all offering programs and services in French. Full-time junior and senior kindergarten programs are available for children aged four and older; and, in some cases, as young as three. Through FLE, children can begin learning French at an age when they are best able to retain it.

FLE makes your child's transition into French-language studies smooth — even if he or she has no previous exposure to French. The programme d'appui aux nouveaux arrivants (PANA), a program for newcomers, ensures them a warm welcome. Another program helps them bring their French-language skills up to par — and, of course, their teachers do, too. The curriculum is supported by a cultural activity program, which immerses students in French culture both inside and outside the classroom.

Students enrolled in FLE benefit from a top-quality education in both French and English. Academic standards are high, but the kids thrive, thanks to small class sizes that allow for a great deal of personal attention for each student. The result? Excellence. To list just one example: 82 per cent of FLE sixth graders perform at or above Ontario's provincial standard in mathematics.

These well-educated students grow up to be highly employable adults. Capable of reading, writing, and holding a full conversation in either official language, their employment prospects span not only English and bilingual work environments, but entirely French-speaking ones, too. In 2006, Francophones in Ontario earned close to $3,500 more than the total population, when median employment income was considered.

The news gets even better. A recent study, released by Le Regroupement des gens d'affaires de la Capitale nationale (RGA) and The Conference Board of Canada, reveals that Canadian Francophones generally enjoy an unemployment rate below the rate of the province in which they live. And their average salary is higher. Wherever francophone speakers are found in this country, they contribute to its economic prosperity: Almost 20 per cent of Canada's GDP, and 22 per cent of its employment, can be traced to the Francophone economic presence.

Your child can be a part of all this. To learn how, visit elfontario.ca.

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A WORLD OF POSSIBILITIES

Glory years reminders surround current Leafs

NHL. Stanley Cup engravings on locker-room door and a large rock part of upgrades to Leafs' facilities

The Toronto Maple Leafs will be reminded of the franchise's championship history every time they leave their locker-room at Air Canada Centre.

Images of the Stanley Cup engravings from the club's glory days have been emblazoned on the inside of the room's doors. They will serve as a motivation tool for a team that hasn't been to the post-season since 2004.

"We want to make sure that we don't lose touch with the past, but we are about the present too," said head coach Randy Carlyle.

His current squad is a far cry from the powerful lineups that earned Cup victories decades ago. The Maple Leafs haven't won a title since 1967 and are coming off a disappointing 13th-place finish in the Eastern Conference.

Still, optimism reigned Monday as several players got together at the team's practice facility for a scrimmage and on-ice workout.

They were buoyed by news that a tentative deal was in place to end the lockout and were looking forward to the frenzied pace that a 48- or 50-game season will provide.

Earlier, Carlyle was swarmed by a phalanx of media members for a 25-minute availability in an Air Canada Centre hallway. He said players were advised that expectations would include better conditioning, a more responsible defensive attitude and that accountability would be held to a higher level.

"Those are the three things that we left the players with over the course of the summer," Carlyle said. "And it's no different now that we're here in the beginning (of the season)."

A large rock now sits below a shiny new team logo on the Leafs' locker room wall, one of several aesthetic changes to the space. Carlyle said the rock — believed to be blue limestone — was brought in from Wiarton, Ont., and symbolizes Toronto's rock-solid organization.

He hopes the changes instil an even greater sense of pride in wearing the Maple Leaf.

"You have to earn your right to be in here," he said.

Carlyle said it was premature to get into roster specifics. However, he did confirm that newly acquired forward James van Riemsdyk would start out on the left wing instead of centre.

A few kilometres down the road at the MasterCard Centre, players were a smiling, happy bunch as they worked out on the practice ice. For the most part, it was old-school pond-style hockey with eight to 10 players a side.

There were no referees, no hitting and no slapshots. The pace was still quite high as players were pleased to get back out on the ice knowing the new season would soon be at hand.

"We're just excited to be back," said Maple Leafs captain Dion Phaneuf. "I think the biggest thing for us as players is to get back out there and put out the product that the fans love to watch — put a good product on the ice. (The lockout) was a tough situation for everyone, but the fans especially suffered through it."

Teammates Mike Komisarek, Tim Connolly, Phil Kessel and John-Michael Liles were also on hand along with a handful of other NHL players.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Toronto Maple Leafs head coach Randy Carlyle shows off the renovations in the Toronto Maple Leafs change room and players lounge, including a rock to its entrance, on Monday at the Air Canada Centre. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Quoted

"It's the same kind of mindset as a full season, but it's going to be a little more desperate. You've got to be good right off the bat."

Leafs forward Clarke MacArthur on playing a shortened season

International Space Station

Astronaut's tweet angers fans outside Leafs nation

Orbiting Canadian astronaut Chris Hadfield may have lost a few fans after tweeting a picture of himself holding a Toronto Maple Leafs plaque.

Commenting on the end of the NHL lockout, Hadfield tweeted from the International Space Station on Sunday he was ready to cheer for the Leafs.

Professing his support for Toronto did not sit well with a number of hockey fans.

Former Montreal La Presse sports reporter Jean-Francois Begin jokingly warned Hadfield to be careful next time he flies over Montreal.

Hadfield is on a five-month visit to the space station and will become the first Canadian to take command of the giant orbiting laboratory in March.

Former Canadian astronaut Marc Garneau also got into the act. The Liberal MP tweeted Hadfield, declaring: "Go Habs Go!"

Mike Lake, an Alberta Tory MP and Edmonton Oilers fan, reminded the 53-year-old astronaut that man reaching the moon (1969) is more recent than the Leafs last winning the Cup (1967).

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Astronaut Chris Hadfield in Kazakhstan in December. THE CANADIAN PRESS

NHL season likely to be 48 games

Sidney Crosby skates with his Penguins teammates on Monday in Pittsburgh. NHL deputy commissioner Bill Daly says a 48-game season is most likely after the league ended its 113-day lockout Sunday morning. GENE PUSKAR/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

The timeline for the start of a shortened NHL season remained up in the air one day after the league and NHL Players' Association shook hands on a tentative deal to end the lockout.

Deputy commissioner Bill Daly told The Canadian Press on Monday morning that hope for a 50-game schedule had faded as the sides continued to finalize the memorandum of understanding their constituents will vote on later this week.

As a result, the league is expected to return with a 48-game season starting Jan. 19.

"It depends on (the) ratification timeline for PA, but it's looking more and more like 48 games is going to be the only option," Daly said in an email.

The NHL's board of governors is scheduled to meet in New York on Wednesday to hold a ratification vote. A schedule had yet to be made formal for players to cast ballots, but it's believed the NHLPA wants to give them time to review the document — meaning they likely won't be able to wrap up a vote before Saturday.

Both sides need to get majority support to adopt the tentative deal they reached early Sunday morning.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Balancing act

The NHL played 48 games following the 1994-95 lockout with a balanced intra-conference schedule for what was then a 26-team league.

- It's going to be a little more complicated this time. The NHL plans to have teams play three games against the 10 opponents within the same conference but outside their division. They will then have an unbalanced schedule against division rivals, with five games against two teams and four against the two others, according to a source.

Knee concerns swirl around RG3

NFL. Next season in doubt as Washington's rookie QB prepares for more tests on ACL

Robert Griffin III's knee begins to buckle during Sunday's loss to the Seattle Seahawks. GETTY IMAGES

It doesn't sound good for Robert Griffin III.

An injury that sidelines RG3 well into next season is a very real possibility — or at least it seemed that way on Monday after coach Mike Shanahan described the results of tests on the rookie's right knee.

Shanahan said the results are prompting the team to send Griffin to Florida on Tuesday to see renowned orthopedist James Andrews for more examinations, essentially a second opinion that will decide the team's fate for the 2013 season.

"There is a concern," Shanahan said. "That's why he's going to see him."

Griffin tore his ACL while playing for Baylor in 2009, and Shanahan said that old injury caused Griffin's latest MRI to prove inconclusive and produce "differences of opinion" in those who have looked at it.

"They want to take another look and have a physical exam with him," Shanahan said, "to make sure they're not looking at old injuries."

A torn ACL typically requires a rehabilitation period of nine to 12 months, although some players don't return to full health until their second season after the injury. On the other hand, one of the season's remarkable stories was Adrian Peterson, who returned about eight months after tearing an ACL and nearly broke the NFL's single-season rushing record.

Shanahan was grilled about his handling of Griffin. Already playing with a heavy brace in his third game since spraining a lateral collateral ligament, Griffin hurt the knee again when he fell while throwing a pass in the first quarter of Sunday's 24-14 playoff loss to Seattle.

Griffin stayed in the game, but he was far from his usual self, clearly favouring the knee.

Then, in the fourth, with the Redskins trailing by seven, the knee buckled the wrong way when Griffin tried to field a bad shotgun snap.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Crimson Tide capitalize early vs. Fighting Irish

T.J. Yeldon of the Alabama Crimson Tide scores a second-quarter touchdown against the Notre Dame Fighting Irish during the Discover BCS National Championship at Sun Life Stadium on Monday in Miami Gardens, Fla. No. 2 Alabama bashed No. 1 Notre Dame to start the NCAA title game, scoring touchdowns on its first three drives to take a 21-0 lead one play into the second quarter. Alabama led 28-0 at halftime. Go to metronews.ca for results. KEVIN C. COX/GETTY IMAGES

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EASTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
Miami	23	9	.719	—
New York	23	11	.676	1
Atlanta	20	12	.625	3
Chicago	19	13	.594	4
Indiana	20	14	.588	4
Brooklyn	19	15	.559	5
Milwaukee	16	16	.500	7
Boston	17	17	.500	7
Philadelphia	15	20	.429	9½
Orlando	12	21	.364	11½
Detroit	13	23	.361	12
Toronto	12	22	.353	12
Charlotte	9	24	.273	14½
Cleveland	8	28	.222	17
Washington	5	28	.152	18½

WESTERN CONFERENCE

	W	L	Pct	GB
L.A. Clippers	27	8	.771	—
Oklahoma City	26	8	.765	1/2
San Antonio	27	10	.730	1
Memphis	21	10	.677	4
Golden State	22	11	.667	4
Houston	20	14	.588	6½
Denver	20	16	.556	7½
Portland	18	15	.545	8
Minnesota	15	15	.500	9½
Utah	17	18	.486	10
L.A. Lakers	15	18	.455	11
Dallas	13	21	.382	13½
Sacramento	13	21	.382	13½
Phoenix	12	23	.343	15
New Orleans	9	25	.265	17½

Monday's results
Washington 101 Oklahoma City 99
Boston 102 New York 96
New Orleans 95 San Antonio 88
Chicago 118 Cleveland 92
Dallas at Utah
Orlando at Portland
Memphis at Sacramento
Sunday's results
Oklahoma City 104 **Toronto 92**
Miami 99 Washington 71
Charlotte 108 Detroit 101 (OT)
Memphis 92 Phoenix 81
Denver 112 L.A. Lakers 105
Tuesday's games — All Times Eastern
Miami at Indiana, 7 p.m.
Brooklyn at Philadelphia, 7 p.m.
Phoenix at Milwaukee, 8 p.m.
Atlanta at Minnesota, 8 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at Houston, 8 p.m.
Wednesday's games
Utah at Charlotte, 7 p.m.
Atlanta at Cleveland, 7 p.m.
Philadelphia at **Toronto**, 7 p.m.
Phoenix at Boston, 7:30 p.m.
L.A. Lakers at San Antonio, 8 p.m.
Milwaukee at Chicago, 8 p.m.
Minnesota at Oklahoma City, 8 p.m.
Houston at New Orleans, 8 p.m.
Orlando at Denver, 9 p.m.
Dallas at L.A. Clippers, 10:30 p.m.
Memphis at Golden State, 10:30 p.m.

NFL

PLAYOFFS

WILD CARD
Saturday's results
Houston 19 Cincinnati 13
Green Bay 24 Minnesota 10
Sunday's results
Baltimore 24 Indianapolis 9
Seattle 24 Washington 14
DIVISIONAL PLAYOFFS
Saturday's games — All Times Eastern
Baltimore at Denver, 4:30 p.m.
Green Bay at San Francisco, 8 p.m.
Sunday's games
Seattle at Atlanta, 1 p.m.
Houston at New England, 4:30 p.m.
CONFERENCE CHAMPIONSHIPS
Sunday, Jan. 20
AFC, TBA
NFC, TBA
SUPER BOWL
Sunday, Feb. 3 — at New Orleans
AFC champion vs. NFC champion, 6 p.m.

NCAA

BCS CHAMPIONSHIP
At Miami Gardens, Fla.
Monday's result
Alabama vs. Notre Dame
GODADDY.COM BOWL
At Mobile, Alabama
Sunday's result
Arkansas State 17 Kent State 13

GOLF

TOURNAMENT OF CHAMPIONS

At Kapalua, Hawaii
Par 73 (36-37)
First Round

Mark Wilson	34-35—69
Nick Watney	36-33—69
Dustin Johnson	36-33—69
Rickie Fowler	35-35—70
Ben Curtis	34-36—70
Carl Pettersson	33-37—70
Bubba Watson	34-36—70
Brandt Snedeker	34-36—70
Keegan Bradley	35-36—71
Ian Poulter	34-37—71
J.J. Henry	35-36—71
Charlie Beljan	36-35—71
Bill Haas	36-35—71
Steve Stricker	34-37—71
Jason Dufner	33-39—72
Webb Simpson	35-37—72
Jonas Blixt	37-35—72
Scott Stallings	35-37—72
Ryan Moore	36-36—72

AHL

EASTERN CONFERENCE

ATLANTIC DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Portland	34	20	12	1	1	100	99	42
Worcester	33	18	12	1	2	88	93	39
Providence	32	17	13	0	2	79	88	36
Manchester	35	16	15	2	2	94	92	36
St. John's	36	15	19	1	1	86	105	32

NORTHEAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Springfield	33	19	9	2	3	109	79	43
Bridgeport	34	17	14	1	2	106	106	37
Albany	31	13	11	1	6	78	80	33
Connecticut	35	15	17	3	0	95	109	33
Adirondack	33	14	17	1	1	79	96	30

EAST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Syracuse	34	22	7	2	3	122	91	49
Binghamton	32	21	8	1	2	104	80	45
Hershey	34	16	16	1	1	87	85	34
W-B/Scranton	34	15	16	2	1	83	90	33
Norfolk	33	14	17	2	0	83	100	30

WESTERN CONFERENCE

NORTH DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Toronto	33	21	9	1	2	115	83	45
Abbotsford	34	17	10	3	4	80	74	41
Lake Erie	36	18	15	2	1	111	114	39
Rochester	33	17	13	2	1	111	104	37
Hamilton	34	12	18	1	3	74	109	28

MIDWEST DIVISION

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Grand Rapids	33	20	10	1	2	103	88	43
Milwaukee	34	17	13	2	2	92	97	38
Rockford	35	17	16	1	1	106	105	36
Chicago	32	15	12	3	2	86	92	35
Peoria	35	14	17	2	2	81	112	32

SOUTH

	GP	W	L	OTL	SOL	GF	GA	Pt
Charlotte	36	20	11	2	3	109	94	45
Texas	35	19	11	3	2	92	92	43
Houston	35	18	11	3	3	104	97	42
Oklahoma City	35	18	13	1	3	115	108	40
San Antonio	37	15	18	0	4	94	104	34

Sunday's results
Norfolk 1 Charlotte 3
W-B/Scranton 0 Connecticut 2
Springfield 4 Providence 1
Binghamton 2 Albany 5
Grand Rapids 2 Milwaukee 3 (SO)
Peoria 2 San Antonio 5
Worcester 2 Hershey 1
Oklahoma City 3 Chicago 6
Houston 3 Texas 4 (OT)
Tuesday's games — All Times Eastern
Hershey at Bridgeport, 7 p.m.
Worcester at Portland, 7 p.m.
Toronto at Hamilton, 7:30 p.m.
Wednesday's games
Syracuse at Rochester, 7:05 p.m.
Binghamton at W-B/Scranton, 7:05 p.m.
Grand Rapids at Rockford, 8:05 p.m.

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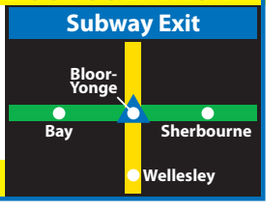

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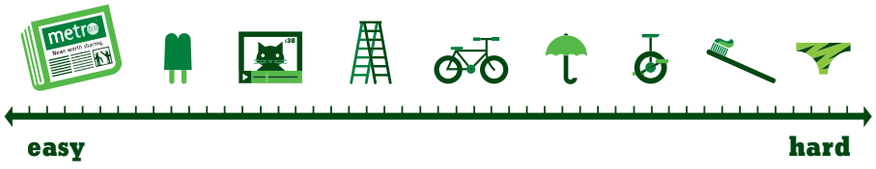

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Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You could easily get the wrong end of the stick today and say or do something you regret. If you do make a mistake, don't make it worse by refusing to admit it. An apology now will save a lot of grief later.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
According to the planets, someone will try to mislead you today. No matter how reliable you think your sources may be, make sure they know what they are talking about. Get a second opinion if necessary.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
Don't change your plans just because you are having second thoughts about a joint enterprise of some kind. Everyone has doubts occasionally — yes, even a Gemini — so sleep on it before making a final decision.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
You may feel tied down by obligations but there is not much you can do about it, so be patient. If you give others the impression you would rather be somewhere else, they may pile more work on you.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
If you are not too careful, today's cosmic influences could loosen your tongue and encourage you to say things that should be kept under wraps. Remember, knowledge is power, and the less others know about you the better.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
You may do something silly over the next 24 hours but nothing bad will come of it. The best way to deal with embarrassing situations is to laugh at them. They're simply not worth losing sleep or friends over.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
You may be tempted to rush things today, to get through your tasks in double quick time, but that would be a mistake. Take your time and make sure you do everything to your full ability. Expect the best of yourself.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You could be rather touchy today, and for no good reason, but that's OK. Everyone who knows you realizes that once in a while you slip into a bit of a funk. And those who don't know you will soon learn.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
Things are going well for you now but there is a danger you could be lulled into a false sense of security. On the money front, especially, you are advised to take nothing for granted. Don't give away anything for free.

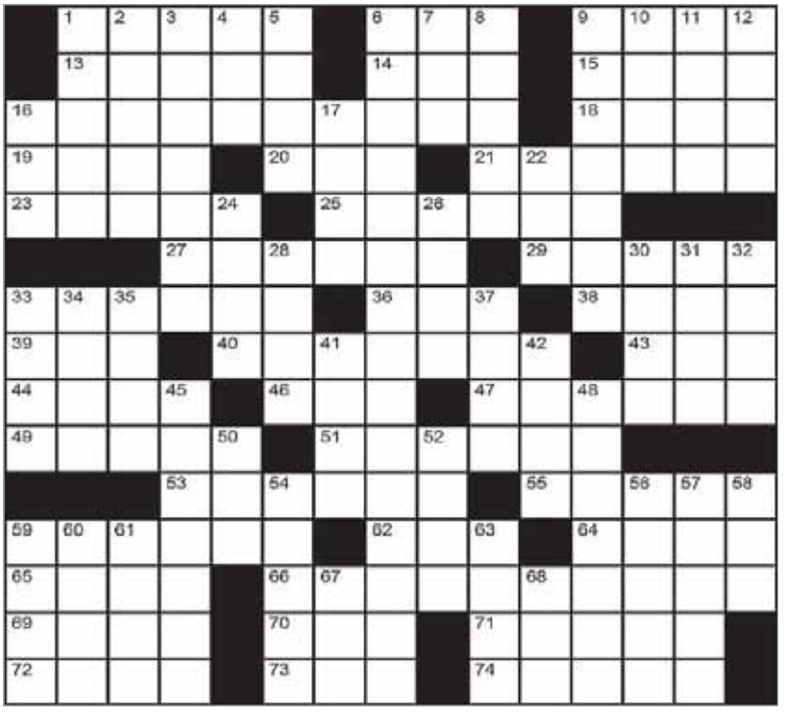
♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
Why are you so worried? What can possibly go wrong? The Sun in your sign indicates that no matter what you do today it will work out for the best, so get on with it and wipe that frown from your face.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
When the Sun moves into your birth sign at the end of next week, your energy will return. But between now and then you are advised to take things easy, mentally and emotionally as well as physically. Pace yourself.

♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
You are in one of your daydreamy moods at the moment and there is nothing wrong with that, but watch out you don't lose touch with reality completely. There are people out there who will take advantage. SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across & Down

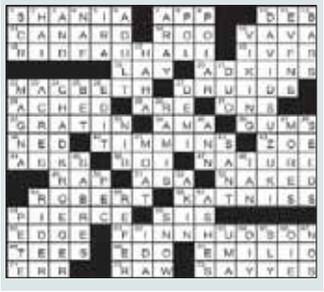
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Rocker born Jan. 8th, 1935
6. "Brother Down" singer Mr. Roberts
9. Recipe meas.
13. Singer Bonnie
14. Pussycat Dolls hit: "Don't __"
15. __ National Park, BC
16. Current exhibit at #9-Down, Terrestrial __
18. A&W __ Beer
19. "...take _ __ song and make it better."
20. For each
21. "Wild __" by Gino Vannelli
23. Litigate again
25. Go "Achoo!"
27. Volcano opening
29. "I'm a __ 4 U" by Britney Spears
33. Soup tidbit
36. Performed
38. Sci-Fi princess
39. Dublin, __.
40. Dressed like Dracula
43. CV
44. Actor Mr. Schreiber
46. Mr. Pacino's
47. Snappy reply
49. 'Sexiest Man Alive', Channing __
51. Penitent person
53. Northwest Territories town
55. Some large cats
59. Canadian actor Mr. Garber of NBC's new drama "Deception"
62. Avril's follower
64. Bananas brand
65. Much: 2 wds.
66. Football-shaped "Family Guy" character: 2 wds.
69. Garage band's CD
70. Banqueted
71. Sir Newton
72. Paradise
73. __'easter
74. Lightly fry

Down
1. Clear
2. Sing-song sounds
3. Bridge with arches
4. 'Social' suffix
5. Supremes song starter!
6. __, Beloved of the Sky (Emily Carr, oil on canvas, 1935): 3 wds.
7. Sushi tuna
8. Papier-__
9. Royal __ Museum (Fossils-viewing spot in Alberta's badlands)
10. Ghost cries
11. Pump or loafer
12. Cultivating containers
16. Golf standard
17. Soap brand
22. Li'l weight units
24. Toronto-born actor Mr. McCormack
26. Mr. Estrada
28. Teatro __ Scala; aka La Scala (Milan opera house)
30. Bubbly bar
31. Challenger
32. The __ Coast
33. Lively tune
34. 'Crit' completer
35. Nair competitor
37. Actress Laura
41. Norwegian king, variantly
42. Meaningful
45. Louis __ handbags
48. Past (and possibly future?) Prime Minister
50. Alphabetic trio
52. "No problem."
54. Country star Keith
56. Never Cry Wolf author Farley
57. Lewis Carroll character
58. Look
59. __ mecum (Handbook)
60. __ _'Orleans, QC
61. Order to Fido
63. Egyptian goddess
67. _ __ Z
68. US airport screening org.

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

					4			
	4			8				
				7	2	3	4	9
	6	5		3			8	2
		4	8		1	5		
3	8			6		7	9	
2	7	1	6	9				
				4			6	
			1					

Yesterday's Sudoku

7	4	9	5	2	1	6	8	3
6	2	1	7	8	3	9	5	4
3	8	5	6	4	9	1	7	2
5	9	2	4	1	6	7	3	8
1	3	8	2	5	7	4	9	6
4	6	7	3	9	8	2	1	5
8	7	3	1	6	4	5	2	9
2	1	4	9	3	5	8	6	7
9	5	6	8	7	2	3	4	1

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